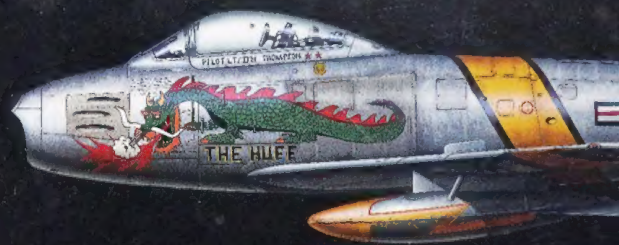


Bruno PAUTIGNY



History & Collections

BRUNO PAUTIGNY

60 YEARS OF COMBAT AIRCRAFT

*from World War One
to Vietnam War*

*History &
Collections*

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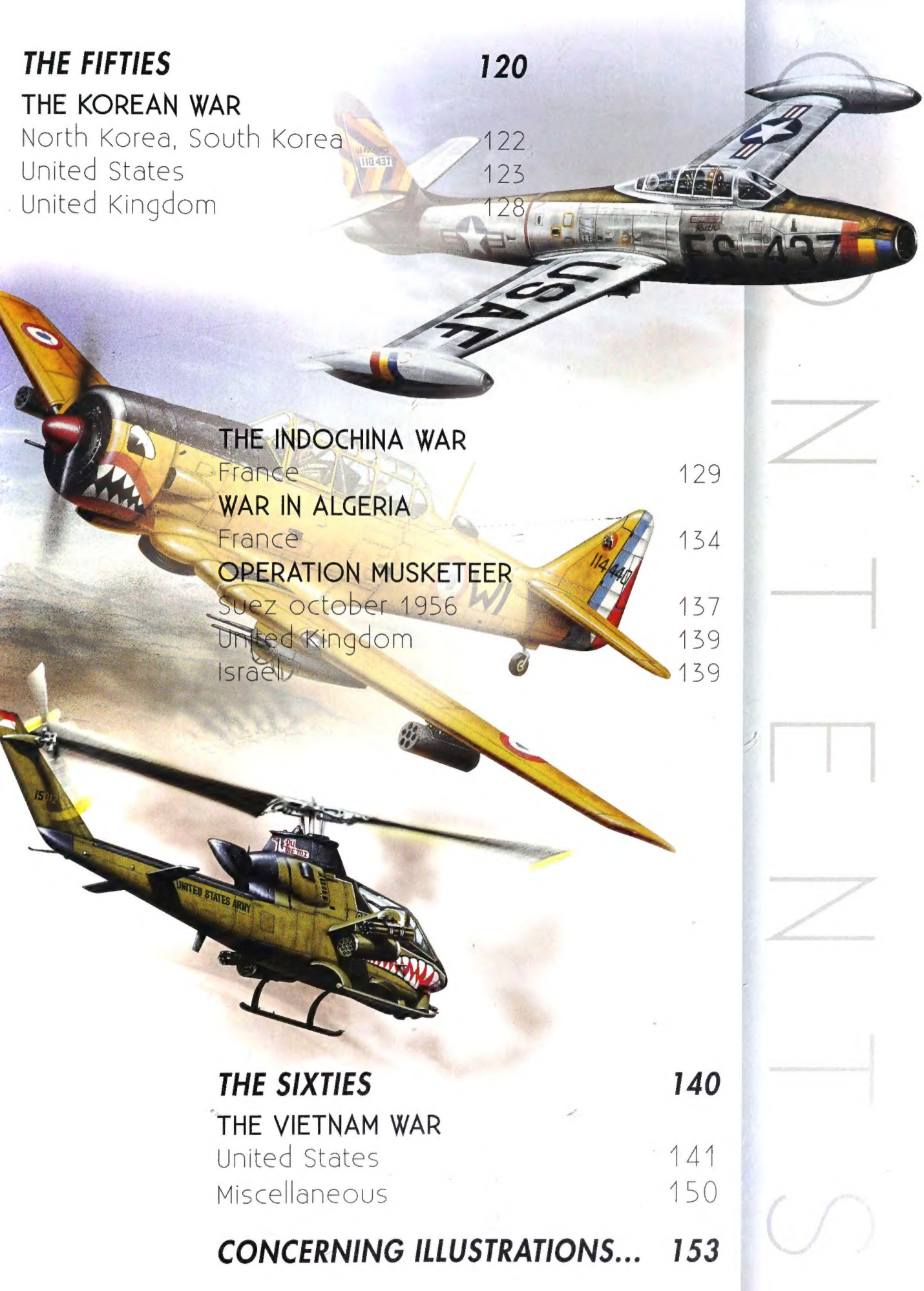
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INTRODUCTION

It is no doubt useful to warn the reader that this book is in no way encyclopaedic and is just a straightforward collection of work consisting of illustrated articles, private commissions, or research.

This explains why many aircraft, despite being historically important, have been left out, whilst others feature several times. This is not a desire, on the part of the author, to favour certain subjects more than others. It is just a simple case of the illustrator being dependent on the articles he is asked to illustrate. The same applies to the air forces of important fighting nations that do not feature here, whilst aircraft of countries deemed as being less important do.

THE GREAT

In my opinion, the aircraft of the Great War remain, with the huge variety of aircraft, their incredible technological evolution over a short period of time, and their decorative camouflage schemes, one of the most interesting periods in the history of aviation. The courage and determination of the aviators of this time is worthy of much admiration as they were, without doubt, the last representatives of a certain form of chivalry.

The introduction of the air arm radically changed the face of a war whose strategies, soon rendered obsolete, had not changed since the Franco-Prussian war of 1870. Suddenly, the battlefield could be observed from above, allowing the gathering of real-time intelligence concerning an adversary's tactical and strategic movements, thus changing the way war was waged.

In the space of four years, these quaint, graceful aircraft, not much different from the first machines to take to the air and equipped with weapons that were unlikely to cause any harm except at close range, were replaced by more solid machines made of laminated wood or tubular steel powered by 200 hp engines and equipped with powerful machine-guns.

Making two dimension illustrations of these magnificent aircraft, be it on paper or canvas, remains a real pleasure for an artist, especially as far as I am concerned. It is a real challenge to illustrate this association of wood, fabric and metal, especially with the flamboyant decorations that most of them bore.

The aircraft of the German Empire were those that bore, without doubt, the most impressive colour schemes, the best of these being the numerous Albatros models and the formidable Fokker D.VII. The French were not far behind with decorations inspired by their military history and its heraldic symbols, but also by its popular culture, or even its advertising. British and American aircraft occasionally bore attractive decorations, but in most cases, a low-key colour scheme was used, which was also the case in the next conflict. The Italians, mostly using French-made aircraft, used sparkling decorations, the motifs of which were most often, for patriotic reasons, made up of the national colours.

We have only mentioned the main belligerents here, but we can say that all, whatever the size of their air forces, used highly visible decorations on their aircraft.

On the other hand, the constructors strove to find the best camouflage to render their aircraft invisible to artillery and fighters. The efficient five-tone French camouflage, the British PC 10 and the surprising German lozenge

scheme, were «enhanced» with bright colours, thus rendering null and void the initial effect.

Despite these chromatic touches, these camouflage schemes were nevertheless efficient at long distances, the aircraft blending perfectly into the dominating ground colours. Once in the air, the objective was very different, the main thing being to affirm one's presence. Indeed, the distinctive insignia of all the «great predators» could make inexperienced pilots keep their distance, or even break off a fight, whereas the best could identify a worthy adversary and thus look for a fight.

Thousands of aircraft were made during this terrible war and manufacturers strove to make the most ingenious and modern planes. Hundreds of different models left the drawing boards and it is very difficult to find amongst them an ugly plane. Of course, some look as if they have come straight from the imagination of a 19th century science-fiction writer, but their shapes, however tortuous, still remain interesting to the eye.

My great interest for this terrible conflict came at an age that one could qualify as being adult, but the beginnings of this addiction really started during my childhood. Indeed, I was lucky enough to have three relatives who had all played a role in this conflict, not as aviators, but as heroic infantrymen. These were cheerful men, full of fun in day-to-day life, but who became quiet and less talkative faced with the inevitable questions of a ten-year-old boy concerning this terrible period of their existence.

Spad VII of RFC No 23 Squadron, seen here at La Lovie in 1917. All of the surfaces have received the standard PC 10 camouflage scheme. Note the absence of cowls on the sides of the engine compartment. The aircraft appears to be a Blériot made example, brought up to the British standard with the fabric lacing typical of this country. With its white horizontal stabilizer, cowl ring and fuselage stripe, this aircraft makes a change from the usual austere liveries used on British planes on the horizontal stabilizer and at the rear of the fuselage.

WAR

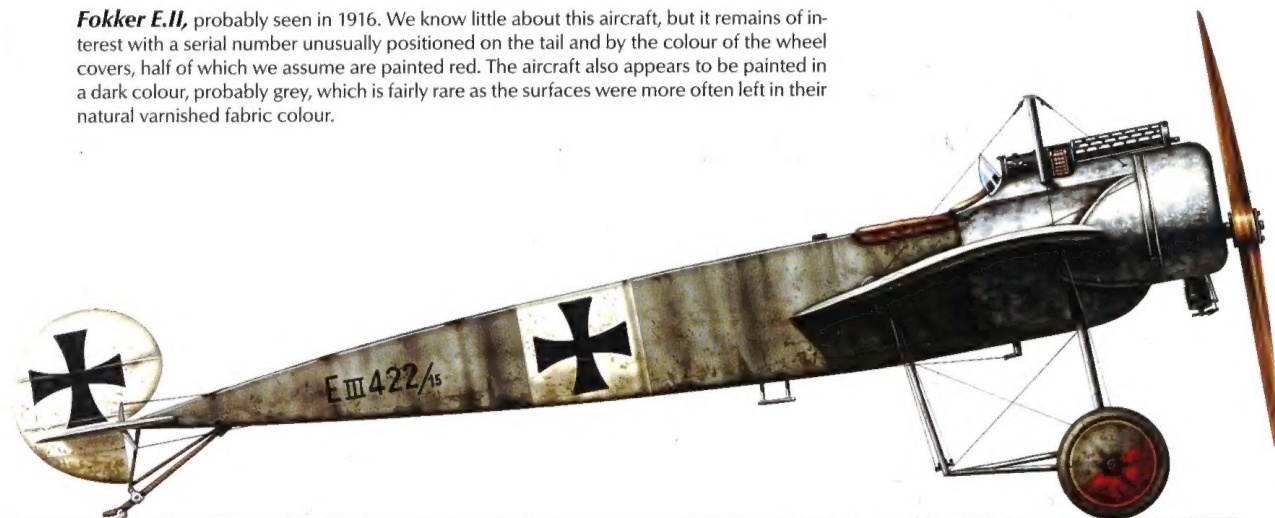
Germany	6
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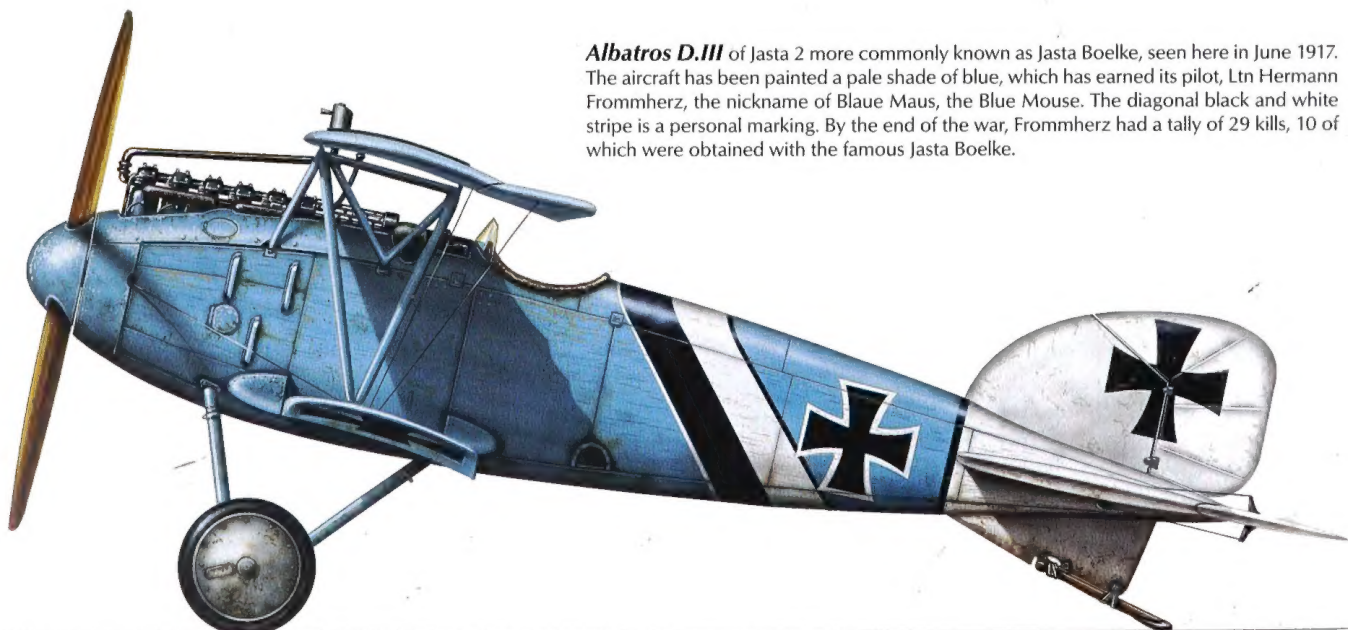
Fokker E.II flown by the famous pilot Ernst Udet, seen here in 1916. Caution should be shown as to the colour of the tricolour fuselage strip, mainly concerning the part painted in red. Several interpretations have stated that this stripe could be red as it is here, or even blue. Indeed, it would seem that, according to historians, it was black. Oblt Ernst Udet had a total tally of 62 kills during the Great War.



Fokker E.II, probably seen in 1916. We know little about this aircraft, but it remains of interest with a serial number unusually positioned on the tail and by the colour of the wheel covers, half of which we assume are painted red. The aircraft also appears to be painted in a dark colour, probably grey, which is fairly rare as the surfaces were more often left in their natural varnished fabric colour.



Albatros D.III of Jasta 2 more commonly known as Jasta Boelke, seen here in June 1917. The aircraft has been painted a pale shade of blue, which has earned its pilot, Lt Hermann Frommherz, the nickname of Blaue Maus, the Blue Mouse. The diagonal black and white stripe is a personal marking. By the end of the war, Frommherz had a tally of 29 kills, 10 of which were obtained with the famous Jasta Boelke.





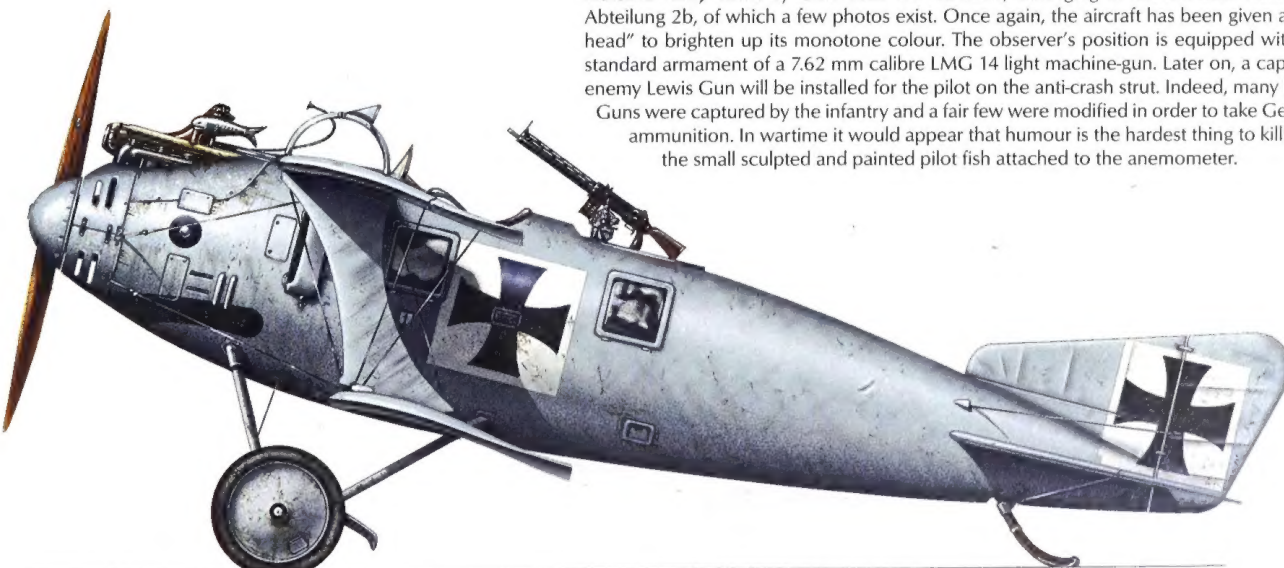
Roland C.IIa. The characteristic shape of this aircraft meant that it was very often given the eyes and mouth of a fish. This elaborate livery breaks a little the monotony of the light grey-blue paint. This "Walfisch" was flown by Leutnant Seibert and his observer Hauptmann Pfleger. The standard armament consisted of a Spandau LMG 08/15 machine-gun and a Parabellum LMG 14, both of which were 7.62 calibre.



Roland C.IIa. This aircraft belongs to an unknown unit; some illustrations portray it with a camouflage made up of dark olive green shades and lilac, but it seems more likely that the dark olive green and brown-red is closer to reality, from the point of view of historians in any case. We note here that the painted "shark mouth" on the nose was not invented by the famous "Flying Tigers". A last touch of humour has been added by the mechanics in the shape of "lady's curtains" painted on the windows.



Roland C.II, flown by Oblt Ritter von Schleich, belonging to the Bavarian Feldflieger Abteilung 2b, of which a few photos exist. Once again, the aircraft has been given a "fish head" to brighten up its monotone colour. The observer's position is equipped with the standard armament of a 7.62 mm calibre LMG 14 light machine-gun. Later on, a captured enemy Lewis Gun will be installed for the pilot on the anti-crash strut. Indeed, many Lewis Guns were captured by the infantry and a fair few were modified in order to take German ammunition. In wartime it would appear that humour is the hardest thing to kill: note the small sculpted and painted pilot fish attached to the anemometer.





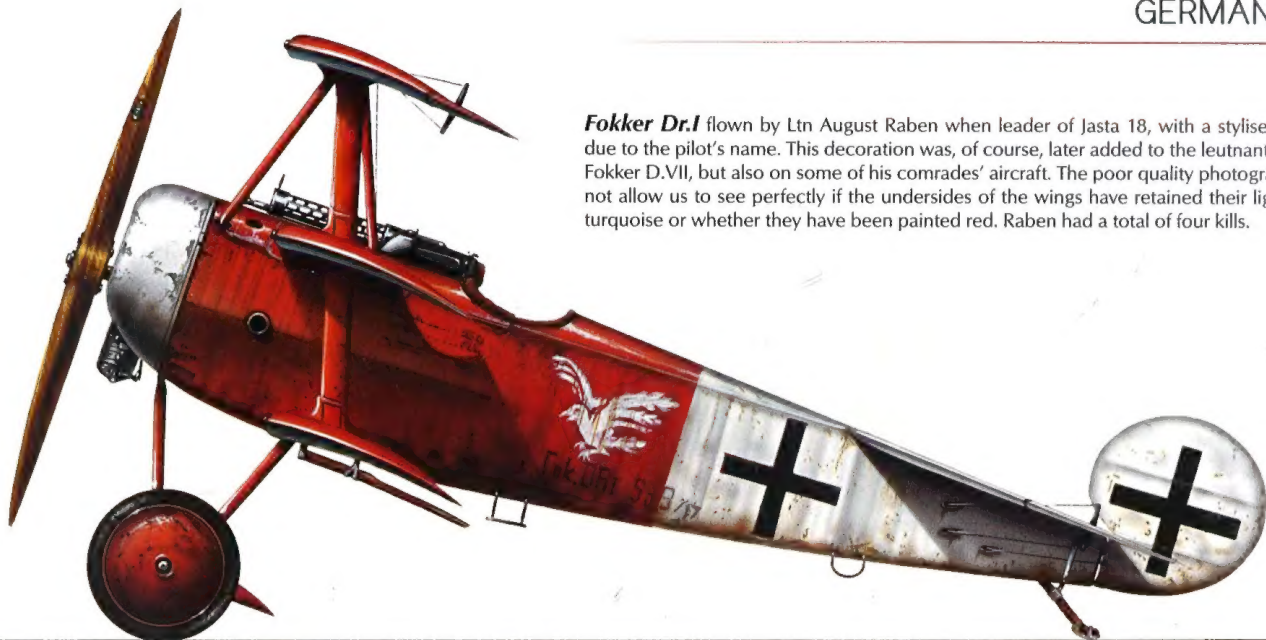
Albatros D.V. This superb illustration belongs to the aircraft flown by Richard Flashar with the green, red-bordered tail plane characteristic of the aircraft of Jasta 5. The rest of the fuselage has been painted in grey, including, apparently, the metallic parts, and bears this magnificent red dragon, the tail of which ends in a plume. The dragon itself differs slightly from the illustration and has been drawn using the photos that are known of this aircraft. The wings are covered with a classic dark green and mauve camouflage. This aircraft was flown next by Hans von Hippel.



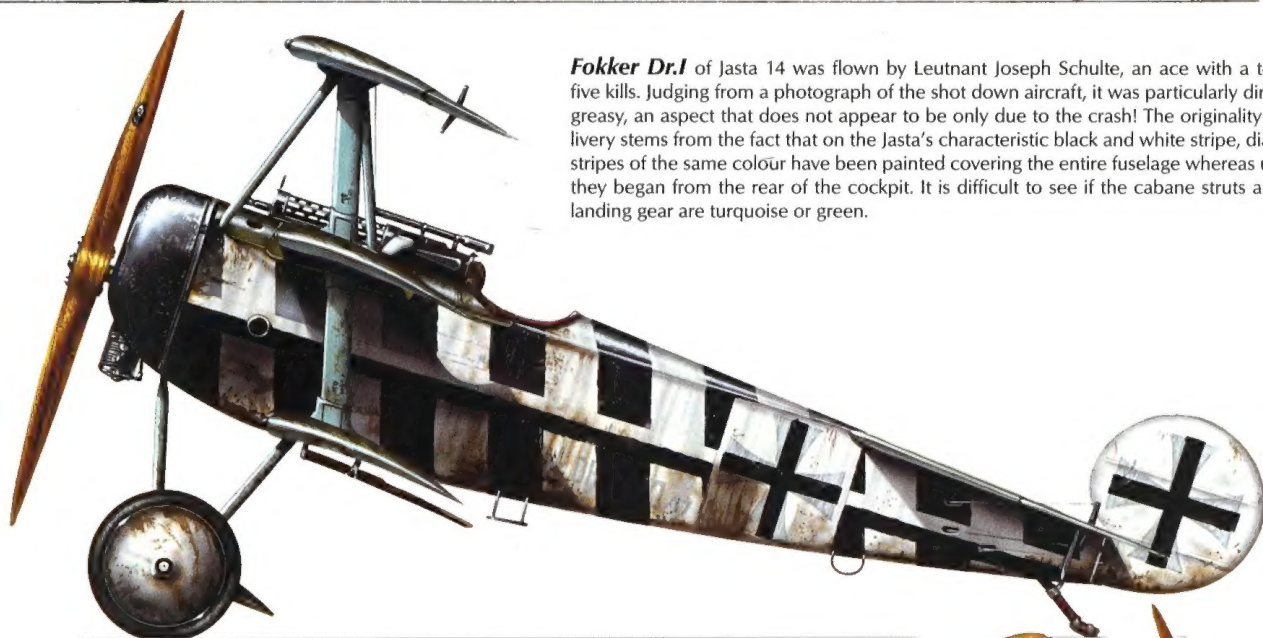
Albatros D.V. This plane was flown by Leutnant Kurt Monnington and belonged to Jasta 15 throughout 1917. The colours used in this illustration are, as always, subject to caution, the interpretation of shades using grey coloured documents due to the lack of written accounts, is always uncertain. Often portrayed as being grey underneath and with a dark green shade for the rest of the fuselage, we have chosen to opt for another colour scheme suggested by historians and which is perhaps more logical, being the light blue shade of camouflage then in use, associated with a brown-red colour. The result is novel and particularly becoming. Monnington ended his career as an ace with Jasta 18 flying aircraft with different liveries, but always with the same sinister death's head.



Albatros D.V. Oberleutnant Bruno Loerzer flew this Albatros when leader of the Jasta 26 in 1917. The use of black and white to paint the aircraft of the Imperial German aviation started a real craze. It is true that this combination of colours is very Germanic. The colour scheme retained for this aircraft is particularly attractive with a six-pointed star on the fuselage and an iron cross on a white background, highlighted by a very thin black border. The serial number painted against the background of the bare plywood adds a little touch of warm colour. The cabane struts also appear to be painted black. As for the wings, they are covered in printed lozenge shaped camouflage fabric of probably five shades of colour.

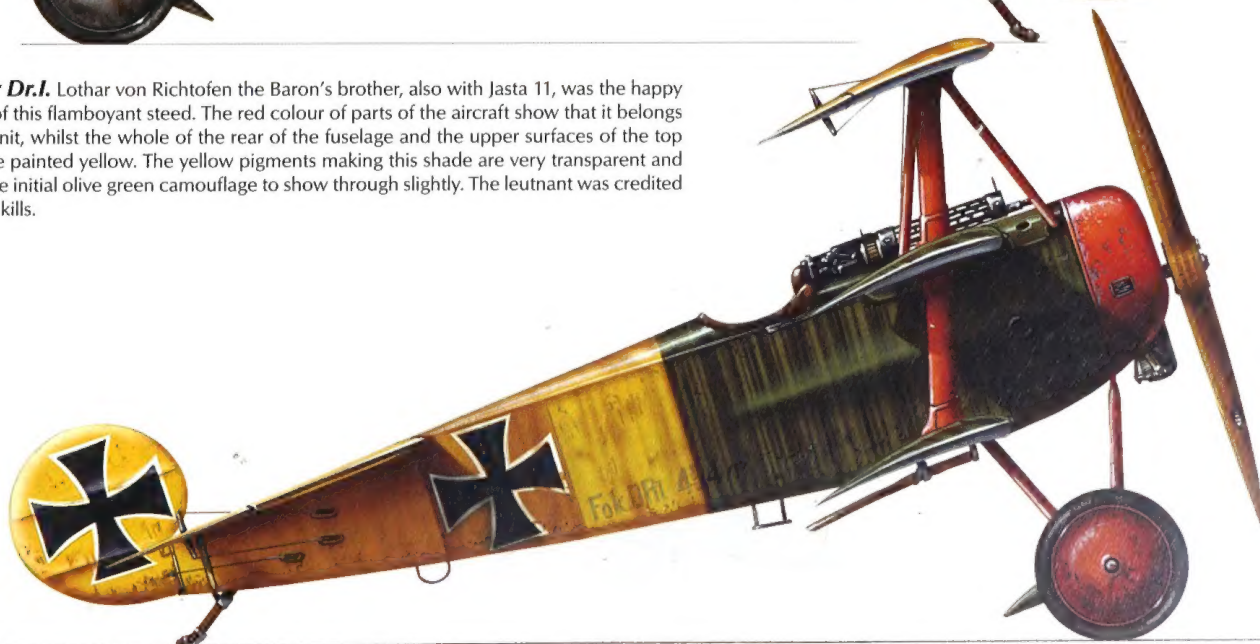


Fokker Dr.I flown by Lt n August Raben when leader of Jasta 18, with a stylised crow, due to the pilot's name. This decoration was, of course, later added to the lieutenant's other Fokker D.VII, but also on some of his comrades' aircraft. The poor quality photographs do not allow us to see perfectly if the undersides of the wings have retained their light blue turquoise or whether they have been painted red. Raben had a total of four kills.

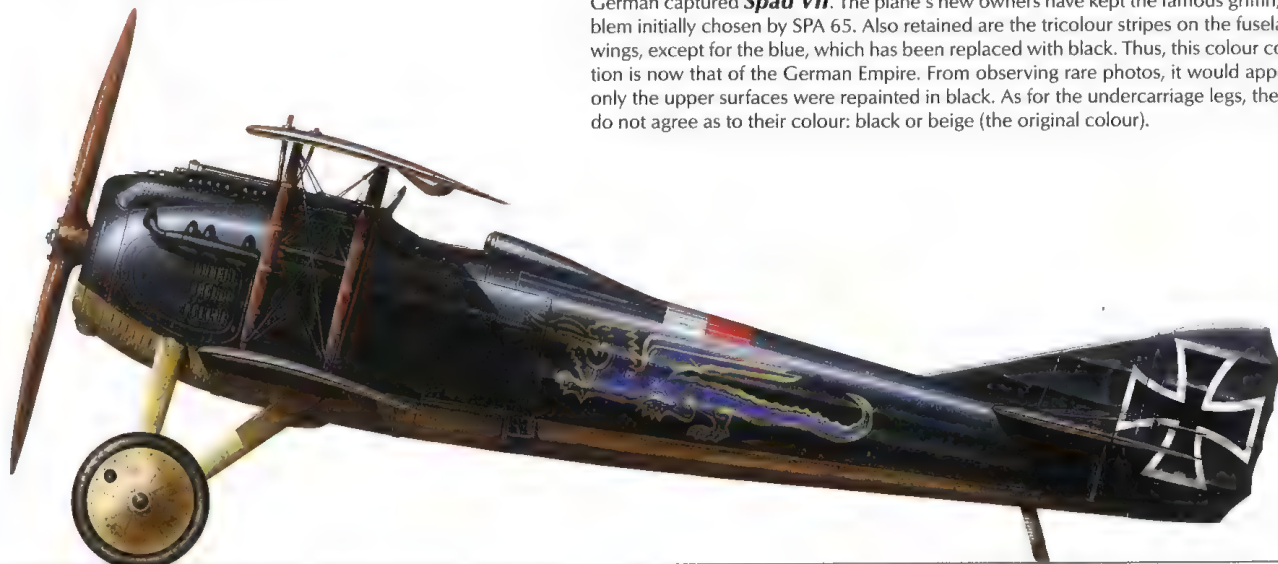


Fokker Dr.I of Jasta 14 was flown by Lieutenant Joseph Schulte, an ace with a total of five kills. Judging from a photograph of the shot down aircraft, it was particularly dirty and greasy, an aspect that does not appear to be only due to the crash! The originality of the livery stems from the fact that on the Jasta's characteristic black and white stripe, diagonal stripes of the same colour have been painted covering the entire fuselage whereas usually they began from the rear of the cockpit. It is difficult to see if the cabane struts and the landing gear are turquoise or green.

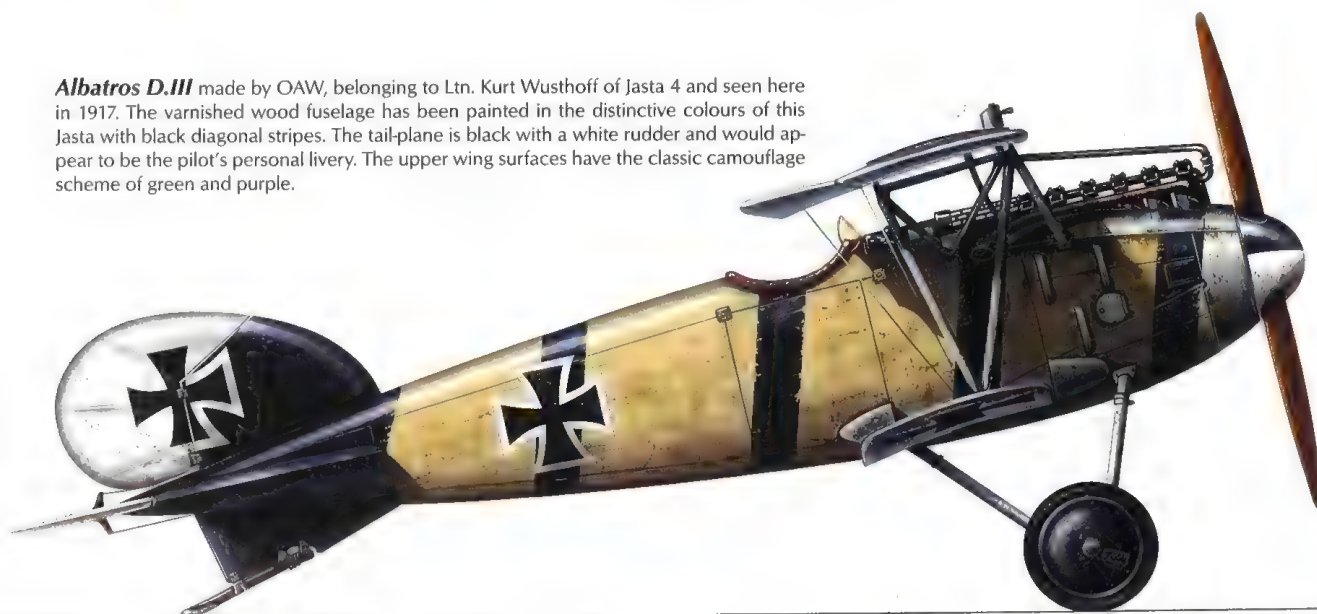
Fokker Dr.I. Lothar von Richtofen the Baron's brother, also with Jasta 11, was the happy owner of this flamboyant steed. The red colour of parts of the aircraft show that it belongs to the unit, whilst the whole of the rear of the fuselage and the upper surfaces of the top wing are painted yellow. The yellow pigments making this shade are very transparent and allow the initial olive green camouflage to show through slightly. The lieutenant was credited with 40 kills.



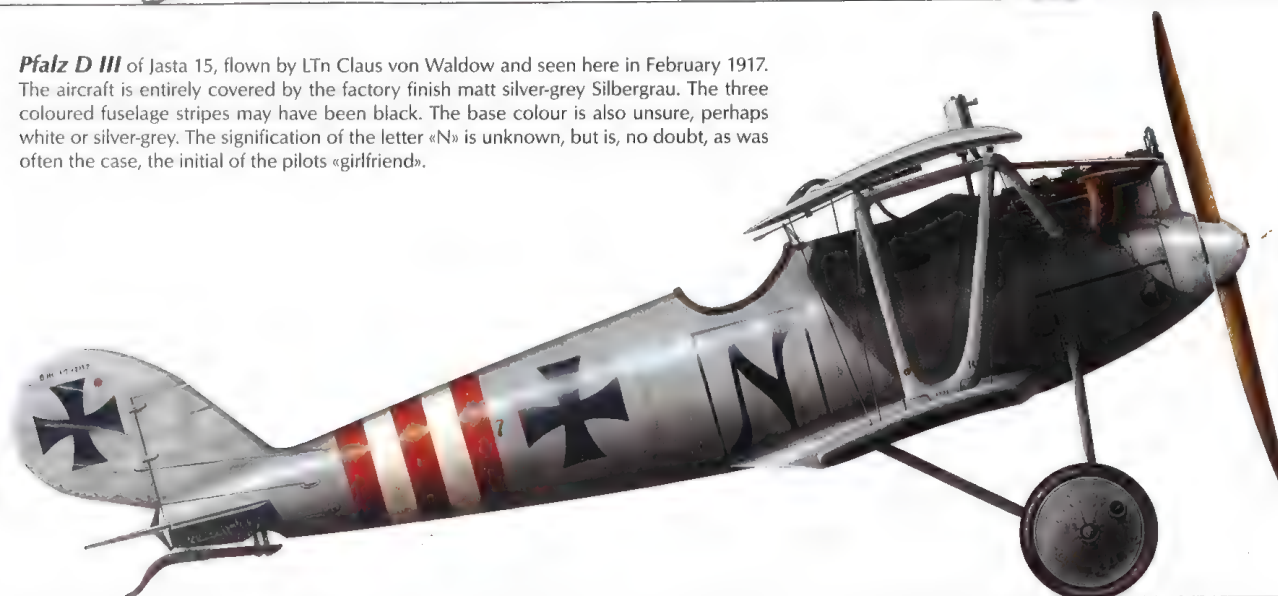
German captured **Spad VII**. The plane's new owners have kept the famous griffin, an emblem initially chosen by SPA 65. Also retained are the tricolour stripes on the fuselage and wings, except for the blue, which has been replaced with black. Thus, this colour combination is now that of the German Empire. From observing rare photos, it would appear that only the upper surfaces were repainted in black. As for the undercarriage legs, the photos do not agree as to their colour: black or beige (the original colour).



Albatros D.III made by OAW, belonging to Lt. Kurt Wusthoff of Jasta 4 and seen here in 1917. The varnished wood fuselage has been painted in the distinctive colours of this Jasta with black diagonal stripes. The tail-plane is black with a white rudder and would appear to be the pilot's personal livery. The upper wing surfaces have the classic camouflage scheme of green and purple.



Pfalz D III of Jasta 15, flown by LTn Claus von Waldow and seen here in February 1917. The aircraft is entirely covered by the factory finish matt silver-grey Silbergrau. The three coloured fuselage stripes may have been black. The base colour is also unsure, perhaps white or silver-grey. The signification of the letter «N» is unknown, but is, no doubt, as was often the case, the initial of the pilots «girlfriend».





Albatros D.III made by OAW, belonging to Jasta 49 and seen here in 1917. The wings, wheel covers and the tail plane probably bear the 'lozenge' type camouflage, possibly, but not categorically, made up of five colours. The forward part of the fuselage is left in its original colour, that of varnished wood for the wooden surfaces and light grey-green for the metallic areas. Although the pattern of the livery is that seen in a photograph, the choice of shade for the blue and red of the propeller cone, the first part of the engine cover and the rear of the fuselage are, as is often the case, perhaps not exact. Note the addition of a telescopic sight, as well as a flare gun (used to signal the start of an attack), the butt of which is visible on the right hand side of the cockpit aperture.



Albatros D.III made by Albatros, belonging to Jasta 5 and seen here at Boistrancourt in 1917. One immediately sees the cooling apertures on the engine cover, a rare configuration that was possibly unit made upon request of the pilot. The aircraft's tail bears the distinctive green and red colours of this famous Jasta, as does the propeller cone and the first third of the engine cover, painted in red, a colour applied on (almost) all the aircraft of this Jagdstaffel. The vertical fuselage stripe, which comes out as a dark stripe on the photograph, is painted in black here, but could have been red. The examination of photographs shows, depending on the period, the presence of a repair where the tail plane has been hit, and wheel covers painted in a dark colour.



Fokker D.VII made by OAW belonging to Jasta 58. This unit's markings are characterised by a black tail and tail unit with a white, black bordered rudder. The radiator hoods of this Jasta's aircraft were generally painted white as seen here. The pilot's personal livery is particularly elaborate, with the crest of the town of Kassel painted onto the red and white stripe.

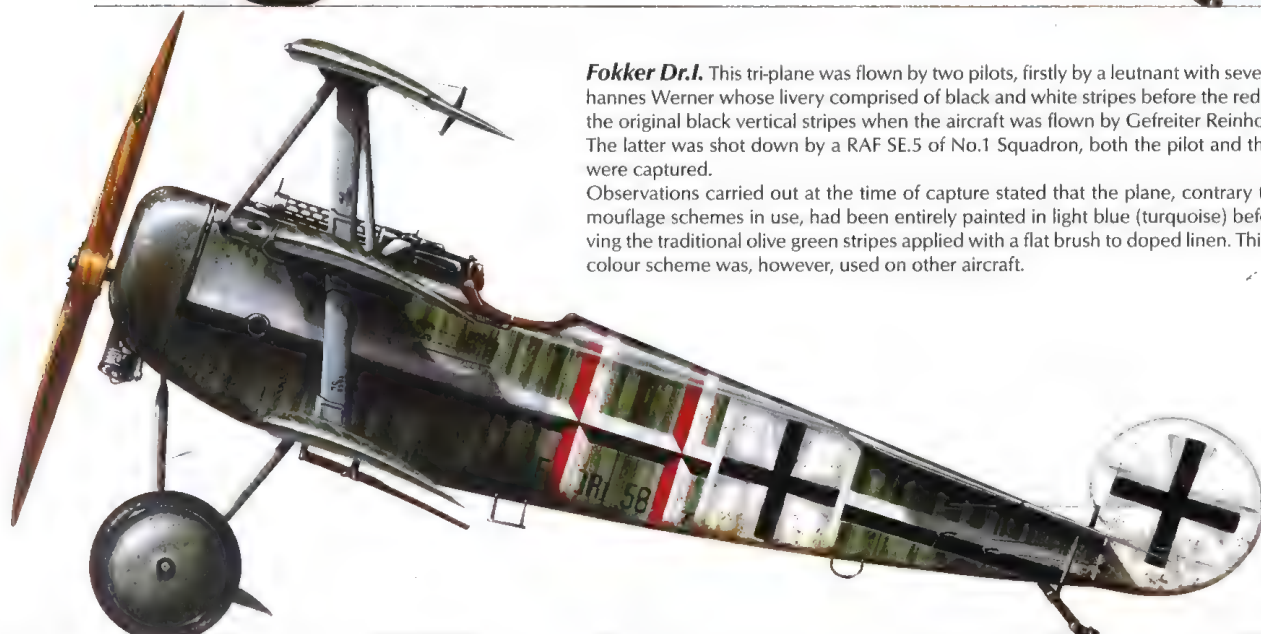




Fokker E.V Flying razor belonging to the II Marine Feld Jasta and flown by Lt. Theodor Osterkamp, an ace with 32 kills. The camouflage known as lozenge, has been completely covered by alternating black and yellow stripes, yellow being the colour that characterised aircraft belonging to the navy. The wing, on the other hand, seems to have kept its original green colour.



Fokker Dr.I. One of Manfred von Richthofen's many steeds, the ace of JG 1 with 80 kills, who for once offers us here a different livery from that which is usually seen. This machine bears the classic camouflage scheme, either doped linen, striped vertically in olive green using a flat brush and partially covered with a transparent shade of red that colours nicely this austere coat. Note that this aircraft, considered as being one of the "Rittmeister's" spare planes, has retained its Teutonic crosses used until the spring of 1918.

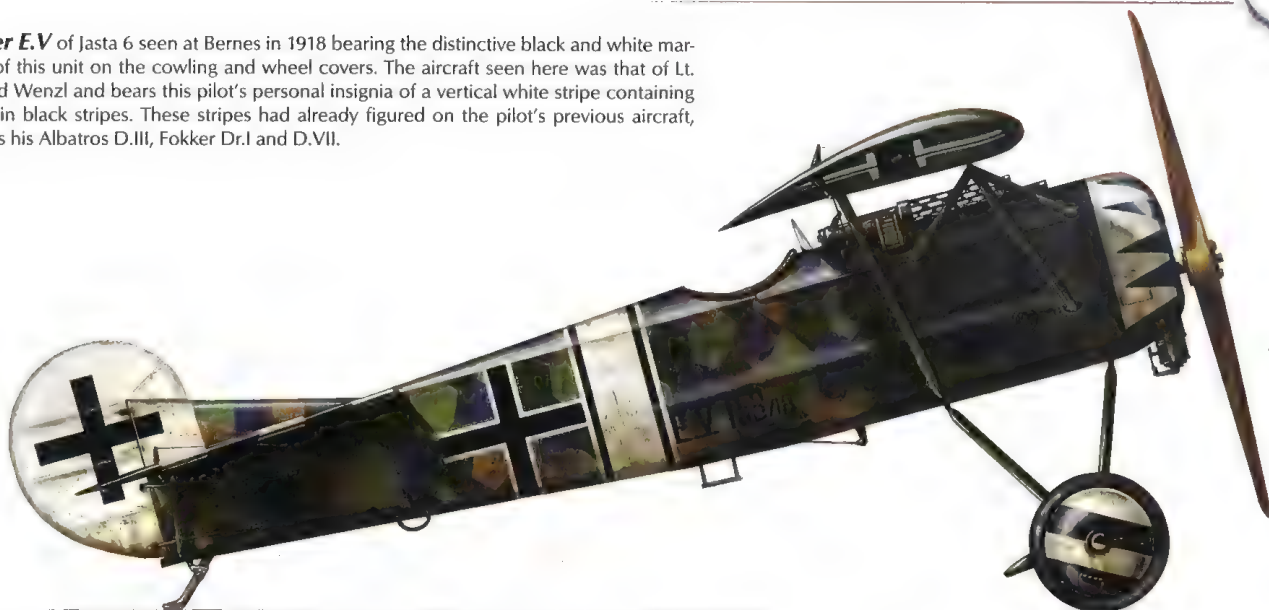


Fokker Dr.I. This tri-plane was flown by two pilots, firstly by a lieutenant with seven kills, Johannes Werner whose livery comprised of black and white stripes before the red replaced the original black vertical stripes when the aircraft was flown by Gefreiter Reinhold Preiss. The latter was shot down by a RAF SE.5 of No.1 Squadron, both the pilot and the aircraft were captured.

Observations carried out at the time of capture stated that the plane, contrary to the camouflage schemes in use, had been entirely painted in light blue (turquoise) before receiving the traditional olive green stripes applied with a flat brush to doped linen. This unusual colour scheme was, however, used on other aircraft.



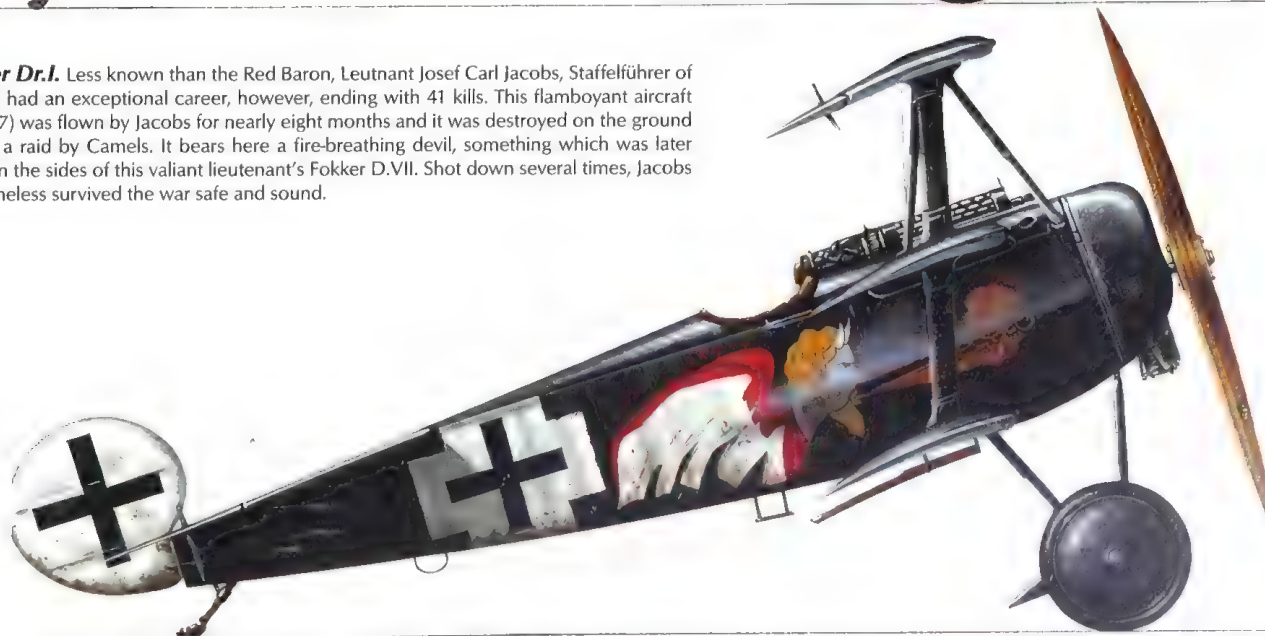
Fokker E.V of Jasta 6 seen at Bernes in 1918 bearing the distinctive black and white markings of this unit on the cowling and wheel covers. The aircraft seen here was that of Lt. Richard Wenzl and bears this pilot's personal insignia of a vertical white stripe containing two thin black stripes. These stripes had already figured on the pilot's previous aircraft, such as his Albatros D.III, Fokker Dr.I and D.VII.

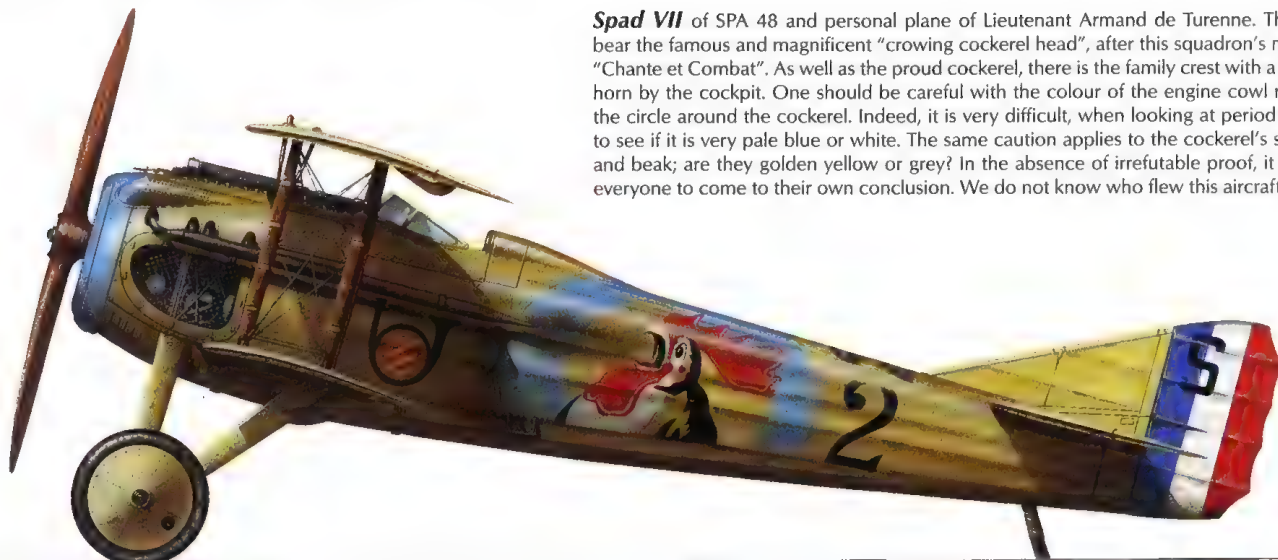


Fokker D.VII of Jagdgeschwader II seen at Le Mesnil in June 1918 and the personal steed of Rudolf Berthold, an ace with 44 kills. The distinctive colours of Jasta 15, comprising of blue and red partially cover the fuselage camouflage. The pilot's personal insignia is represented by a winged sword. The upper plane surfaces are painted blue with the middle of the top wing having a white stripe.



Fokker Dr.I. Less known than the Red Baron, Leutnant Josef Carl Jacobs, Staffelführer of Jasta 7, had an exceptional career, however, ending with 41 kills. This flamboyant aircraft (450/17) was flown by Jacobs for nearly eight months and it was destroyed on the ground during a raid by Camels. It bears here a fire-breathing devil, something which was later seen on the sides of this valiant lieutenant's Fokker D.VII. Shot down several times, Jacobs nevertheless survived the war safe and sound.





Spad VII of SPA 48 and personal plane of Lieutenant Armand de Turenne. The sides bear the famous and magnificent "crowing cockerel head", after this squadron's motto of "Chante et Combat". As well as the proud cockerel, there is the family crest with a hunting horn by the cockpit. One should be careful with the colour of the engine cowl ring and the circle around the cockerel. Indeed, it is very difficult, when looking at period photos, to see if it is very pale blue or white. The same caution applies to the cockerel's stomach and beak; are they golden yellow or grey? In the absence of irrefutable proof, it is up to everyone to come to their own conclusion. We do not know who flew this aircraft.



Spad VII of SPA 103, the squadron of the famous René Fonck. The aircraft is equipped with Le Prieur rockets, a fairly rare thing for a Spad VII. The sides bear yet another form of the stork, painted here in an original way. The engine cowl ring is blue, the distinctive sign of this squadron. The name of this aircraft's pilot is not known.



Spad VII of Squadriglia N 561 flown by Tenente (lieutenant) Frédéric Loiseau. This aircraft is one of the small French contingents that went to help the Italians in their struggle against Austrian bombers over the "Most Serene Republic" of Venice. The sides bear the Lieutenant's personal emblem, a small running elephant that we can also find on another of his aircraft, a Nieuport 23. Once more, the colours used here are perhaps not an exact representation.



Spad VII C1 (serial number S 1777) of SPA 124. This was the aircraft of the Franco-American pilot Gervais Raoul Lufbery, decorated with a swastika, a traditional Indian emblem symbolising the idea of the Earth's movement and the mystery of the Being. Note that it is shown back to front. Lufbery enlisted in the Foreign Legion in August 1914 and became a qualified pilot at the school of Chartres in 1915. The official number of his kills is 17, however, according to his brothers in arms, the number in reality approached 70! Lufbery was killed in action. With his Nieuport in flames, he jumped from the aircraft over a river, but unluckily landed on a fence.



Spad VII C1 (serial number S 1331) of SPA 124. The sides of this Spas, flown by Kenneth Archibald Marr, a sergeant at the time, bears a stylised Lakota Sioux head which at the time became the unit's definitive insignia. The round cowl seen here in white, was also painted blue; it is a possibility, but on the black and white photograph, the very pale shade remains impossible to identify. This San Francisco man who came to fight alongside the French, became a squadron commander at the time of the Nieuport 28, with the 94th Aero Squadron.



Spad VII C1 (serial number S 1615) of SPA 124. The Spad flown by Harold Buckley Willis with its front painted in green, brings a touch of originality in the midst of the squadron's other planes that were just painted with a tightening nitrate and a beige-yellow colour. On the left hand side of the upper wing there is a large "W", also in green. Number 1615 has already been illustrated with just the circular cowl painted green. The accounts of veterans and their companions concerning the decoration of their aircraft are sometimes contradictory, depending on rather capricious memories, or badly interpreted or brightened up by the listener.



Nieuport 17 C1 (serial number 1977) of SPA 124. Flown by Sergeant Robert Soubiran, based at the Cachy airfield near Amiens in the winter of 1916. The fabric covered areas are covered with an aluminium paint and the sides of the aircraft bear the head of a Seminole Indian, an insignia that was adopted by the squadron in October 1916, the artistic quality of which is not very high. The Nieuport seen here does not have its synchronised Vickers machine-gun.



Spad XIII. This was the last plane flown by the famous ace Georges Guynemer who disappeared on 11 September 1917, and the one with which he obtained his 53rd and final kill. This "2 rouge" bears, as it should, the famous stork with its wings down, an insignia that was chosen by Commandant Brocard who was particularly attached to the return of the "imprisoned Alsace" of his beautiful country. The bird has been applied with a stencil over a tricolour stripe. There is another "2 rouge" on the upper wing accompanied by a black "X".



Spad XIII of SPA 153, seen in 1918 and flown by Caporal Ferre. This squadron's insignia was apparently chosen by Capitaine Gigodot who was greatly interested in Egyptology. The beautiful illustration of the sun god Horus, symbolised by a falcon, was, therefore, painted on the aircraft. The poor quality of the photograph does not allow us to read the aircraft's serial number, so the one here is purely fictional, except perhaps for the last numbers. Behind the haughty attitude of the corporal, we can see the beginnings of the aircraft's number in a dark colour outlined in white. The base of this number is a horizontal line and has made us opt for a "2", of which the interpretation of the shape and colours have been imagined here; it could also be Roman numerals.



Spad XIII seen in 1918 and belonging to SPA 77, whose insignia is represented by a cross of Jerusalem, emblem of the poor people's crusade. This cross is normally placed within a blue pennant, however, judging from the photographs, its very dark tone looks more like a really dark colour, rather than the effect of the photographic chemical of the time that rendered yellow almost black. We have chosen to illustrate this cross potent in black, but this is just an interpretation. The pennant has, in this case, the rare addition of a pole mounted with an imperial eagle. In most cases, this pennant was present on the upper surface of the top wing.



Spad XIII of SPA 82 seen in 1918 and flown by Sergent Delelée. The squadron's insignia was inspired by the name of one of its captains, Le Coq de Kerland. The cockerel head is placed within a red and white pennant and we have thus also chosen white for the aircraft's number that appears to be very light in a French Air Force archive photograph. The serial number is not very clear on the photograph that this illustration is taken from and we have used the number 1016, which could also be 1110. The aircraft is particularly clean and has not yet apparently undergone the hardships of life in the field, judging from its perfectly clean surfaces.



UNITED STATES



Spad XIII of the 103rd Aero Squadron of the USAS (United States Air Service). Following the United States declaration of war, SPA 124 was officially renamed the 103rd Aero Squadron in February 1918. The flamboyant aircraft seen here was that of Robert Soubiran who had become a captain within this unit. The Spads of the 103rd were particularly colourful and rendered useless the new five-tone camouflage scheme. Once again, it is difficult to evaluate if the round cowl is red, white and blue as we have portrayed it, or just red and white! Note that the tail rudder has been painted in the American way of red, white and blue.



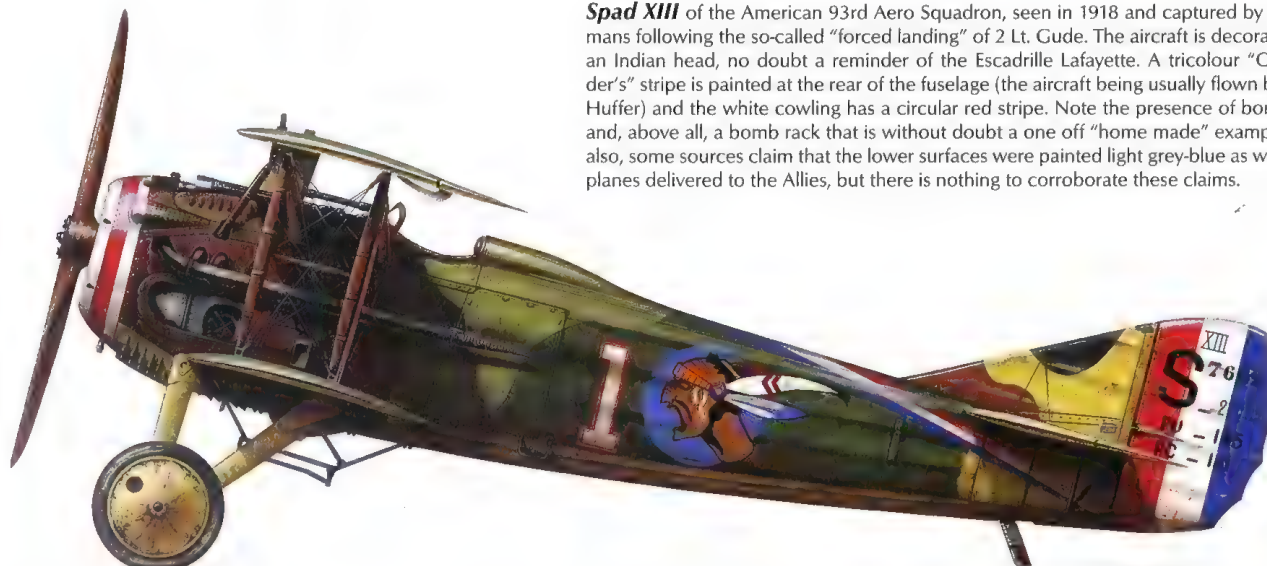


Spad XIII of the 27th American Aero Squadron and one of the many steeds of Frank Luke. The latter was preceded by a very bad reputation by his comrades who gave him the nickname of the "The Arizona Boaster". Nevertheless, at the time of his death, Luke had a total of 14 balloon kills and four aircraft shot down. The decoration of this aircraft is particularly elaborate, note that part of the fuselage front is not painted and the absence of side hatches with cooling vents, replaced with thin wire. This aircraft is sometimes portrayed with its lower surfaces painted light grey-blue, but the photographs do not permit to distinguish the difference between this shade and the usual yellow ochre.



Nieuport 28 C1 (serial number N 6169) of the 94th Aero Squadron

In March 1918, the 94th arrived at the Front and welcomed into its ranks the veterans of the Escadrille Lafayette, notably Lufbery, Hall, Peterson and Huffert. A good pupil and benefiting from his "teachers" combat experience, Edward V. Rickenbacker found fame within the famous "Hat in the ring" squadron, flying many aircraft that were always decorated with the red bordered white number 1. It was, however, with a Spad XIII that Captain "Eddie" achieved 21 of his 26 kills.



Spad XIII of the American 93rd Aero Squadron, seen in 1918 and captured by the Germans following the so-called "forced landing" of 2 Lt. Gude. The aircraft is decorated with an Indian head, no doubt a reminder of the Escadrille Lafayette. A tricolour "Commander's" stripe is painted at the rear of the fuselage (the aircraft being usually flown by Major Huffer) and the white cowling has a circular red stripe. Note the presence of bombsights and, above all, a bomb rack that is without doubt a one off "home made" example. Here also, some sources claim that the lower surfaces were painted light grey-blue as with other planes delivered to the Allies, but there is nothing to corroborate these claims.



Sopwith Camel flown by the two aces, L. A. Breadner and J. A. Glen. This aircraft is shown in the livery it used during its time with No 3 Squadron RNAS. The fabric surfaces are covered with the standard PC 10 colour, whereas the engine and wheel covers are red.



German captured **Spad VII**. The plane's new owners have kept the famous griffin, an emblem initially chosen by SPA 65. Also retained are the tricolour stripes on the fuselage and wings, except for the blue, which has been replaced with black. Thus, this colour combination is now that of the German Empire. From observing rare photos, it would appear that only the upper surfaces were repainted in black. As for the undercarriage legs, the photos do not agree as to their colour: black or beige (the original colour).



Sopwith Camel belonging to No 3 Squadron and flown by Lt L.S. Breadner, France 1917. This aircraft has a particularly elaborate livery with a rising sun painted on the tail fin and also on the elevators. The fuselage's back bears a white diamond containing a maple leaf and a crown. The upper surfaces of the lower wings bear a king of diamonds playing card.

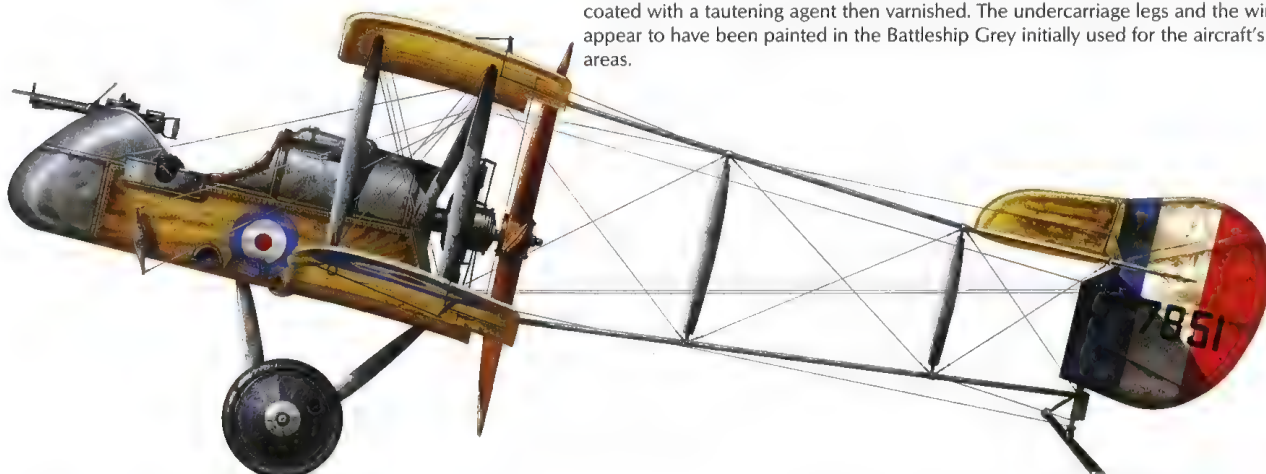


DH-2 Airco 6011, belonging to "A" Flight of No 24 Squadron, France mid- 1916.

The upper wing surfaces, fuselage sides and tail fin are painted in brown-green PC 10. The metallic areas are in Battleship Grey. The exterior wing struts bear the red and white colours used by "A Flight". The layout of the latter identified the aircraft and its pilot. The Airco only had one .303 Lewis machine-gun.



DH-2 Airco 7851, belonging to "C" Flight of No 32 Squadron, France early 1917. Rapid identification was made possible by the various forms of concentric black and white circles on the wheel covers. The aircraft is not camouflaged, with the fabric covered surfaces just coated with a tautening agent then varnished. The undercarriage legs and the wing struts appear to have been painted in the Battleship Grey initially used for the aircraft's metallic areas.

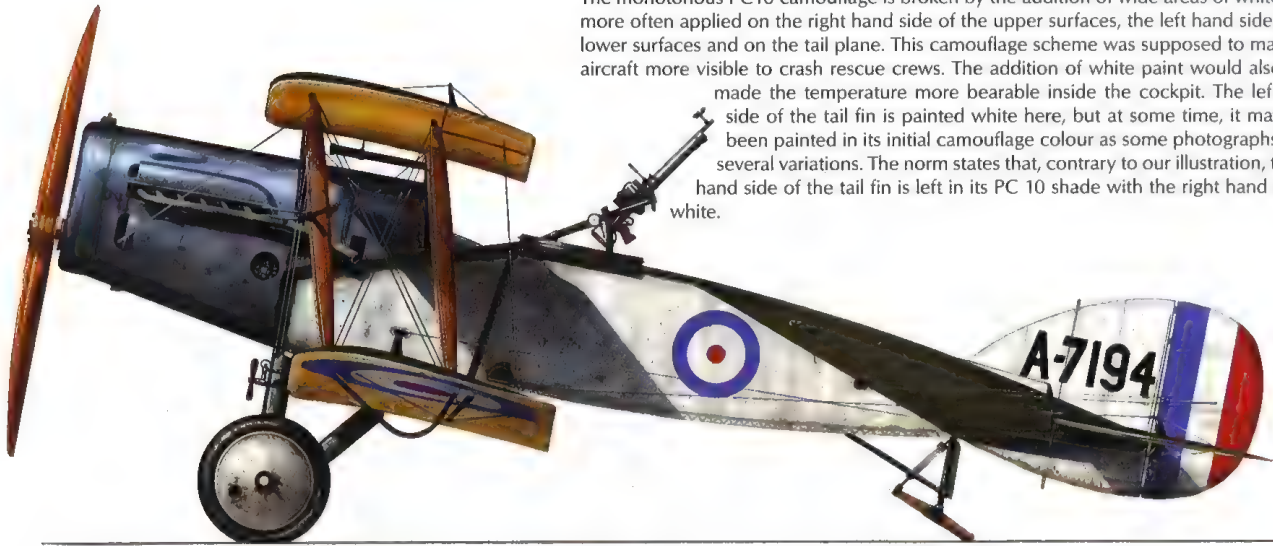


Sopwith Camel "Black Prince" of "C" Flight No 13 Squadron RNAS, flown by FSL WJ Mc Kenzie and seen here in 1918. The metallic parts of the engine cowl and wooden parts of the cockpit are painted in gloss black. The fabric covered areas that come out very dark in photographs, lead us to believe that they were probably painted with the PC 12 colour tone, rather than the standard PC 10.





Bristol F 2B A7194 of No 1 Squadron AFC, seen here at El Mejdel (Palestine) in 1918. The monotonous PC10 camouflage is broken by the addition of wide areas of white paint more often applied on the right hand side of the upper surfaces, the left hand side of the lower surfaces and on the tail plane. This camouflage scheme was supposed to make the aircraft more visible to crash rescue crews. The addition of white paint would also have made the temperature more bearable inside the cockpit. The left hand side of the tail fin is painted white here, but at some time, it may have been painted in its initial camouflage colour as some photographs show several variations. The norm states that, contrary to our illustration, the left hand side of the tail fin is left in its PC 10 shade with the right hand side in white.



Bristol F 2B D8084 of No 139 Squadron, seen at Villaveria (Italy) at the end of 1918. It is the same aircraft as the previous one, but bears a different livery. The fuselage has black and white vertical stripes, which pleasantly break up the austere camouflage of khaki PC 10 for the fabric, covered surfaces and Battleship Grey for the metallic areas. The small character that now decorates the engine cowl has often been mistakenly shown with a walking stick touching the ground, whereas a good quality photograph of this aircraft shows it held aloft.

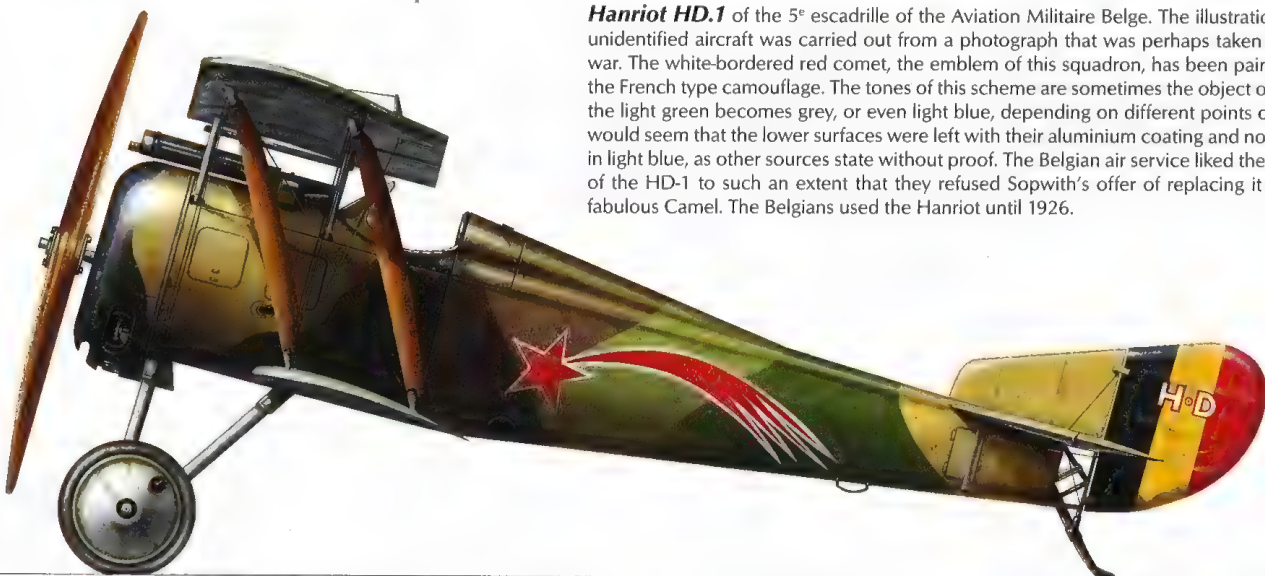


Bristol F 2B D8084 of No 139 Squadron in 1918, seen here in its initial livery with a large "white T" and two white stripes with a red stripe. According to photographs, one can see that the surfaces of the upper wing have received identification stripes which appear to be of a dark colour, but which, according to historians, were probably red. This plane was flown by Capt. Sydney Dalrymple and 2nd Lt Beagle. Captain Dalrymple became an ace with five kills, four of which were achieved whilst flying a Bristol.





Hanriot HD.1 of the 9^e escadrille belge "Thistle Squadron". One of the many steeds of the ace Willy Coppens. Once more, the colour of this plane could trigger a lot of discussion with the same sterile outcome. Some state that the latter, like the HD 1 n° 23, was entirely blue. As for us, we have chosen to base our assumptions on other sources that state that the aircraft's metallic areas, except for the cowl, were left bare. The only certitude is that Sous-lieutenant Coppens' aircraft were blue which led to the Germans giving him the nickname of "Der Blaue Teufel", the Blue Devil. Coppens was given the title of Baron of Hourthulst after the Armistice, he was the greatest "balloon killer" of the Great War with 37 balloons shot down.



Hanriot HD.1 of the 5^e escadrille of the Aviation Militaire Belge. The illustration of this unidentified aircraft was carried out from a photograph that was perhaps taken after the war. The white-bordered red comet, the emblem of this squadron, has been painted over the French type camouflage. The tones of this scheme are sometimes the object of debate, the light green becomes grey, or even light blue, depending on different points of view. It would seem that the lower surfaces were left with their aluminium coating and not painted in light blue, as other sources state without proof. The Belgian air service liked the qualities of the HD-1 to such an extent that they refused Sopwith's offer of replacing it with the fabulous Camel. The Belgians used the Hanriot until 1926.

ITALY



Hanriot HD.1 of the 78a Squadriglia flown by Sergeant Guido Mardini in the summer of 1918. The Italian pilots were great fans of original personal decorations and the one portrayed here is particularly attractive. Some sources show this aircraft without the national colours usually painted on the lower wings surfaces; despite our scepticism, we have chosen this configuration for this illustration. These aircraft were built in Varese by the Nieuport-Macchi factories and destined only for the Italians. Their metallic parts were left bare and the fabric was either given a silver coat, or covered with a transparent cream varnish on the bare fabric accompanied by a camouflage consisting of spots that were more often dark green applied in a haphazard way.

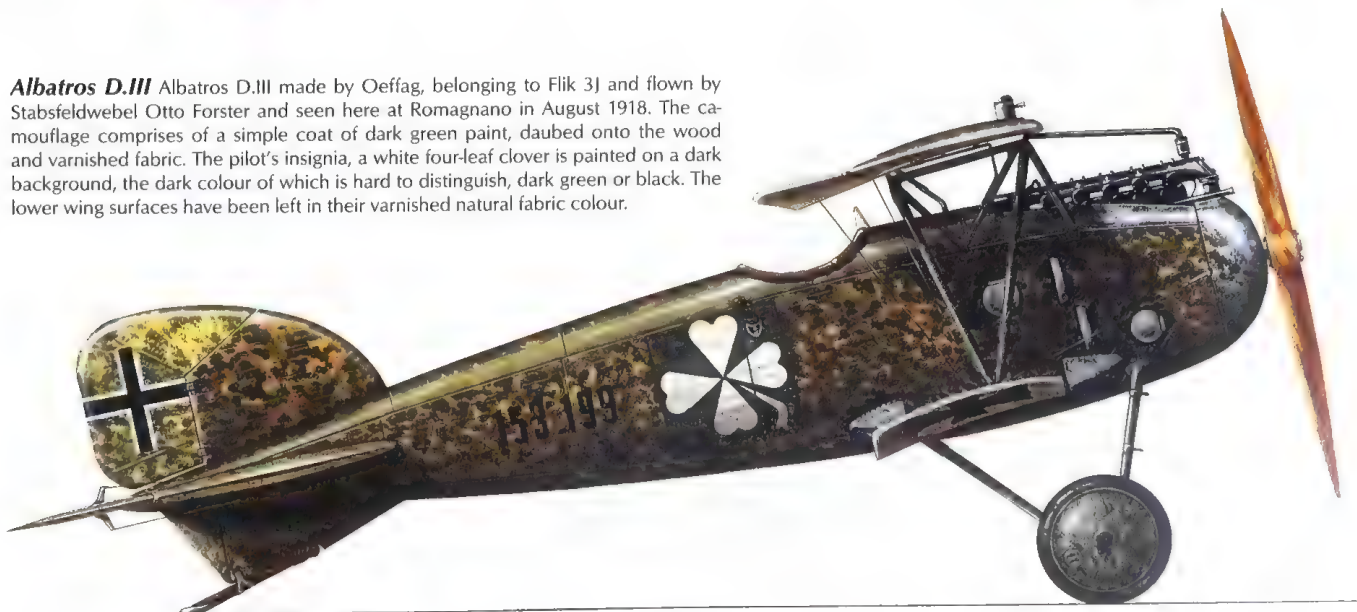


Albatros D.III made by the Austro-Hungarian manufacturer Oeffag, belonging to Flik (FliegerKompanie) 3J and seen here in 1918 at the Romagnano airfield. This aircraft was one of Oberleutnant Friedrich Navratil's steeds, an ace with ten kills and whose personal insignia was a very stylised red heart with an arrow through it. The camouflage scheme is made up of brown-green mottles applied to all surfaces, except for the lower areas and the horizontal tail fin. The Austro-Hungarian Albatross were equipped with Daimler engines and Schwarzlose machine-guns, meaning that the engine cowl was cut out and had a different shape to those of German aircraft.



Albatros D.III made by Oeffag, an Austro-Hungarian manufacturer, belonging to Flik 41J and flown by Hauptmann Godwin Brumowski. It is seen here in Torresella in February 1918. The transparent red colour that covers the whole aircraft is perhaps a sort of homage to the livery of the ace, Manfred von Richthofen. The white death's head bordered in black was painted on every aircraft flown by Brumowski, as well as some of his fellow pilots' Albatros. This pilot had a tally of 35 confirmed kills and 8 probables, making him the top Austro-Hungarian ace.

Albatros D.III Albatros D.III made by Oeffag, belonging to Flik 3J and flown by Stabsfeldwebel Otto Forster and seen here at Romagnano in August 1918. The camouflage comprises of a simple coat of dark green paint, daubed onto the wood and varnished fabric. The pilot's insignia, a white four-leaf clover is painted on a dark background, the dark colour of which is hard to distinguish, dark green or black. The lower wing surfaces have been left in their varnished natural fabric colour.



WORLD WAR 1939-1945



This conflict is without doubt the most popular with military aviation enthusiasts. It is true that during this period, and given the number of fighting nations, a great variety of aircraft were seen.

Although the inter-war period saw much progress made in the domain of aircraft, it was the almost six-year period of conflict that saw a boom in development, with countries competing with each other to produce continually higher performance aircraft.

Just as had been the case during the Great War, the progress made over what can be seen as a short period of time, commands admiration. In 1939, the countries that would face each other, in a fairly short time for some, had air forces made up of aircraft that although good for the time, would soon rapidly prove themselves to be obsolete. The most striking example of this evolution is without doubt that of Germany which, at the beginning of the war, had aircraft made from mid nineteen-thirties technology, but which ended the war with formidable jet aircraft such as the Messerschmitt Me 262.

An illustrator's dream

This period is very rich in material for aeronautical historians, the specialist press and publishers, model-makers and, of course, painters and illustrators. The subjects that we are most often asked to do to illustrate articles, private commissions and «box

art» for model kits, concern more than 90% this period, which can also be broken down into separate subjects.

The European Front to the fore

Curiously, it is the aircraft that served on the European Front that seem to be the most popular with Second World War enthusiasts. Next in line is the Mediterranean Front, then the Pacific. The «black crosses» and the «stars and bars», of any period, are easily the most popular ahead of the aircraft of other fighting nations. The next in line are British aircraft, especially the Spitfire. French, Japanese and Italian aircraft come next, despite having a great variety of superb and interesting aircraft. Bringing up the rear are the Soviet aircraft which were, for a time, a fashionable subject.

To some people, this classification may seem unfair, but it remains a fact. This is perhaps simply due to supply and demand, with publishers and model kit manufacturers not wishing to take a risk with aircraft that may not sell. Readers and kit enthusiasts will not show much interest in subjects that are not well documented or where good reproductions are not available on the shelves. Thankfully, times are changing, and increasingly everyone can now find good quality publications that will satisfy their passion, however «exotic» it might be.

THE

Germany	26
Finland	46
France	49
United Kingdom	61
Italy	82
Japan	87
United States,	
US NAVY	91
United States,	
USAAF	100



From an illustrator's point of view, this rich period constitutes an inexhaustible source of inspiration. My preference lies with the Pacific War, equally with carrier or land-based planes.

It has to be exotic

This is no doubt due to my taste for the exotic and, concerning graphics, the wear and tear caused by weather conditions in these far-off climes. It is a great opportunity to «let oneself go» when it comes to patina and add an extra touch of realism. On the other hand I am not particularly enthusiastic when it comes to illustrating planes that bear the swastika, except for the Fockewulf Fw 190, the shape of which, in my opinion, is a delicate mix of brute strength and elegance.

Despite being French, I always dread having to illustrate a decent example of my country's air forces, especially if it is from the Second World War. This is not because of the aesthetic qualities of French aircraft nor, of course, their history, but is simply due to their three-tone camouflage schemes for the upper surfaces, an austere combination of grey, green and brown that in my opinion, I have never really managed to illustrate perfectly. It is a sorry and frustrating state of affairs when a French illustrator is unable to render his country's aircraft attractive.

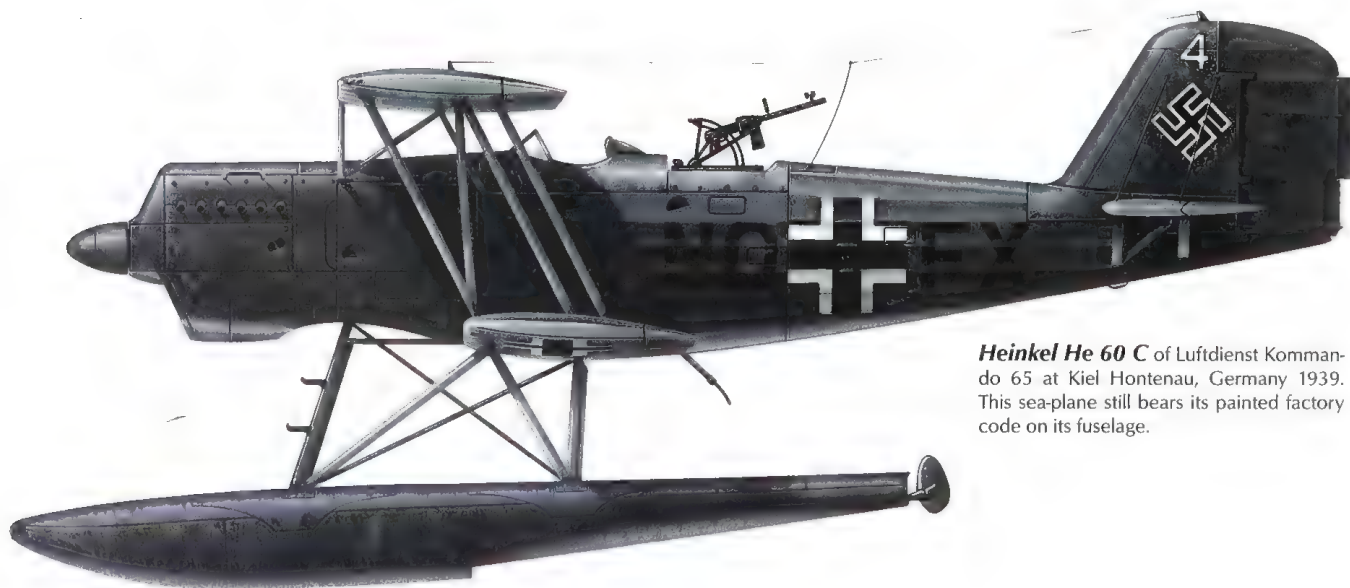




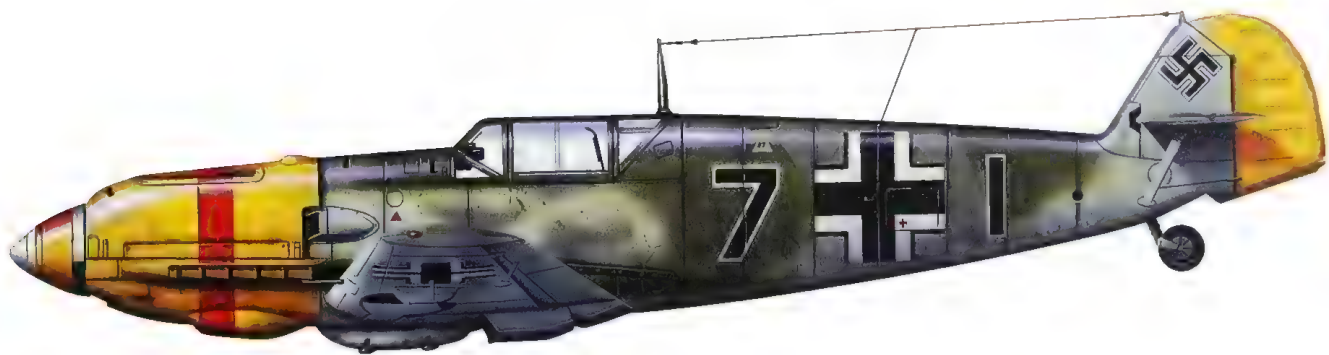
Messerschmitt Bf 109C of JG 51 seen here in Germany in 1939. Although it has a large air vent and slightly heavy lines, this model inaugurated the future lineage of the "109" and its incomparable design. The insignia of this JG represents a rather humiliating caricature of the British prime minister Neville Chamberlain, be-spectacled, with a "drippy nose" and carrying an umbrella. The aircraft has the camouflage in use at the time comprising of green RLM 70/71 for the upper surfaces and light blue RLM 65 for the lower surfaces.



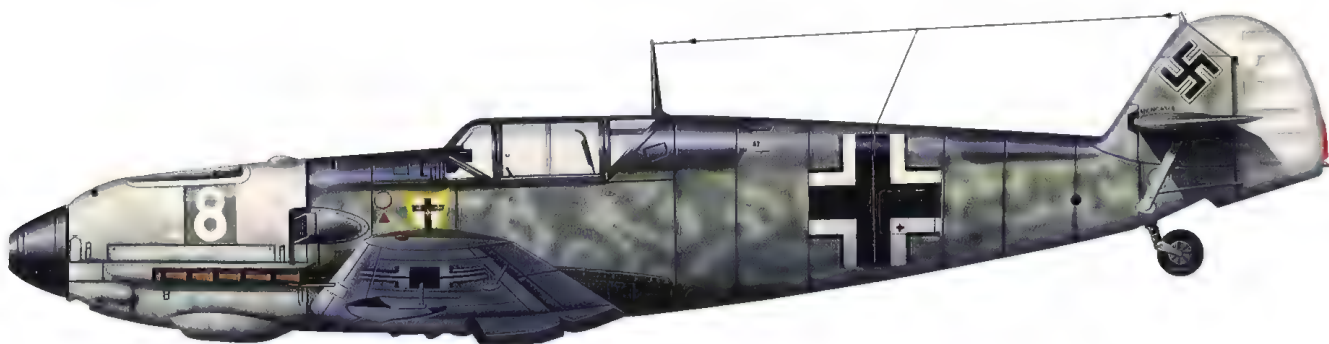
Junkers Ju 87B-1 of St.G 1, Poland 1939. The very sober camouflage is made up of a combination of green RLM 70, 71 and light-blue RLM 65. The only touch of extravagance to this livery is the white propeller cone.



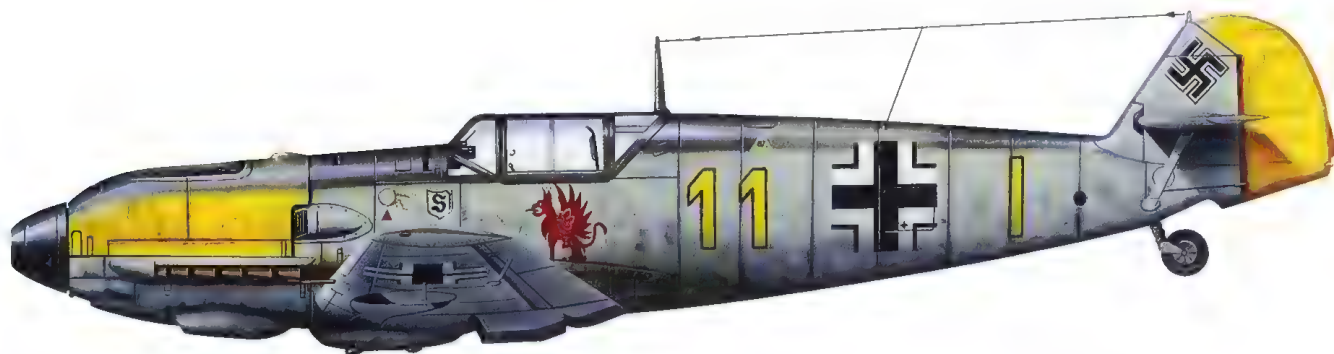
Heinkel He 60 C of Luftdienst Kommando 65 at Kiel Hontenau, Germany 1939. This sea-plane still bears its painted factory code on its fuselage.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-4/B of 8./JG 53 "Pikas". This plane, that made a belly-landing in Kent in October 1940, bears a red stripe on its yellow cowling, the distinctive marking of the Staffelkapitäne of this unit. Here again, the grey-blue sides of the fuselage have been covered with a haphazardly applied camouflage. Note the tip added to the propeller spinner covering the muzzle of the axial cannon.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-4 of 7./JG 27 shot down near Canterbury on 6 September 1940. This plane proves the great diversity of camouflage used during the Battle of Britain. Here the sides have a scribble pattern camouflage whilst the identification markings are white. The personal number added to the front is, once again, against regulations.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-4/B of 9./JG 26 "Schlageter" shot down over Great Britain on 5 November 1940. As well as the regulation unit insignia (Gothic S and red Höllehund), this fighter-bomber transformed Emil has its rudder and part of its engine cowling painted yellow for identification purposes.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-1 "1 Red" of 5./JG 77 "Herzas", Jever (Germany), December 1939. Usually flown by Leutnant Wilfried Schmidt, this aircraft was flown by Feldwebel Alfred Held when he obtained his first kill against an RAF plane, this being symbolised by the vertical white stripe painted on the tail fin. If we are to believe period photos, this aircraft only had, on its upper surfaces, one colour, in all probability the dark-green Dunkelgrün RLM 71.



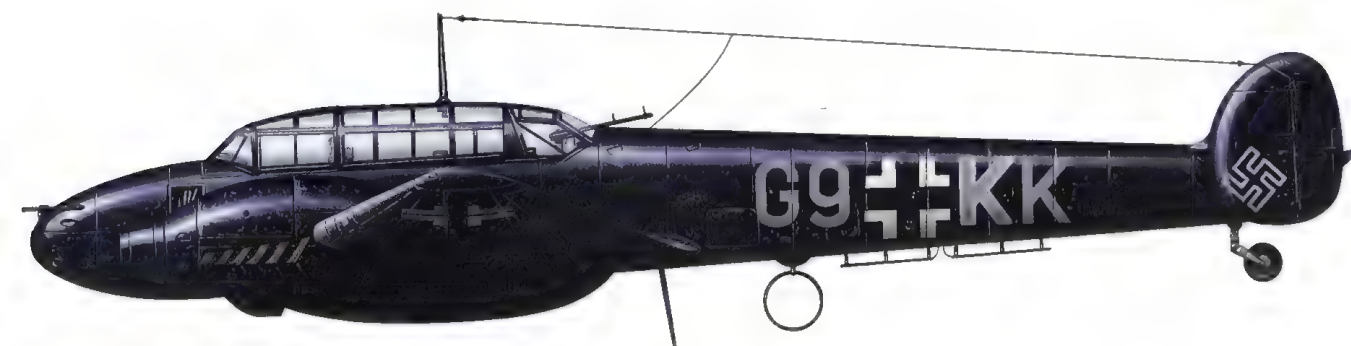
Messerschmitt Bf 109E-1 "3 Yellow" of 6./JG 52, Spire (Germany), March 1940. This aircraft has the second camouflage scheme adopted by Luftwaffe fighters at the beginning of 1940, the dark-green (RLM 70) of the upper surfaces being replaced by the greenish-grey (RLM 02) in order to achieve a bigger contrast. This camouflage is painted very high on the fuselage, painted, like the lower surfaces, in pale blue-grey (RLM 65 Himmelblau). The engine cowl, later painted yellow for identification purposes, has the stylised eagle's head chosen by 6. Staffel/JG 52 for their insignia.



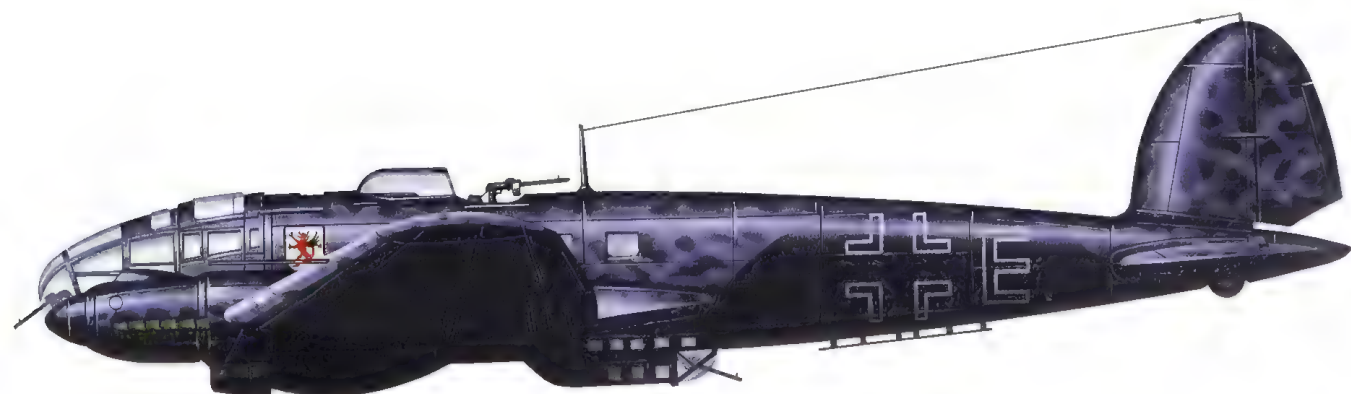
Messerschmitt Bf 109E-1 "14 Yellow" of 6. (J) Trägergruppe 186, Germany, winter 1939-40. This aircraft's camouflage is characterised by the first model used by the "Emil" at the beginning of the war comprising of angular shapes (RLM 70 and 71) with blue RLM 65 lower surfaces. The join between the two colour tones is very low on the sides of the fuselage. The 6. (Jagd/Chasse) Trägergruppe (carrier-borne) 186 was initially formed to be carried on the Graf Zeppelin aircraft carrier and equipped with the 'naval' version of this fighter (Bf 109T). However, this vessel was never made and the unit served as a standard land based fighter group.



Dornier Do 217E-4/R-19 (W.Nr 4272) of 9./KG2 that sent 80 bombers of this type against allied shipping on 19 August 1940 losing 16 of them. It is equipped with a periscope on top of the cockpit to control the fire of the defensive tail machine-guns.



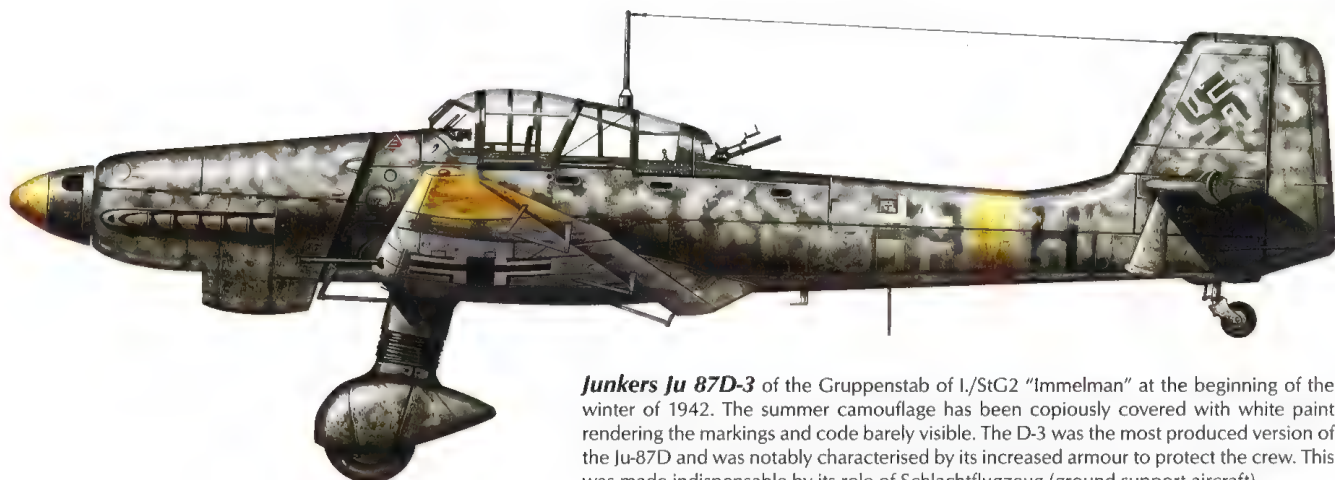
Messerschmitt Bf 110C of 2./NJG 1, autumn 1940. Obsolete in its original role of daytime heavy fighter (Zerstörer, literally meaning destroyer), this elegant twin-engine plane was much more efficient as a night-fighter, a role that it began in the summer of 1940, with the planes of NJG 1 recording their first successes at the beginning of July the same year, notably against RAF twin engine planes such as the Wellington, Hampden or Whitley.



Heinkel He 111P of KG 55 based at Villacoublay (France) in the autumn of 1940. Initially planned to ensure the transition with its successor, the He 111H, the Heinkel 111P was the first model of this bomber to be equipped with an entirely glass nose enveloping the cockpit, with production beginning in 1938 and remaining in use until well after the end of the war. Used in raids against Great Britain, this aircraft bears its unit insignia on the fuselage, whereas some of the markings (rudder swastika and the lower wing crosses) have been covered by the camouflage for night operations.



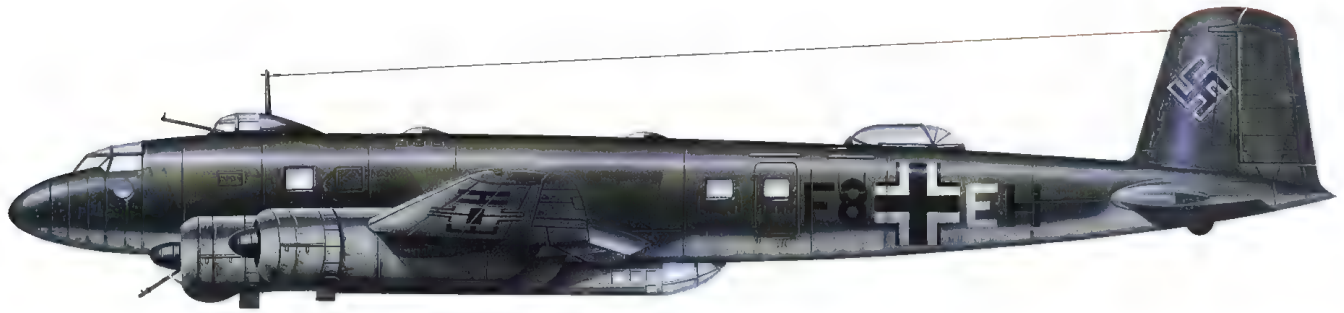
Junkers Ju 88A-4 of 2./KG. 106. This Kampfgruppe took part in the fight against merchant shipping, but also maritime reconnaissance with the Junkers Ju 88D. The aircraft here bears the standard camouflage on the upper surfaces, whereas the lower surfaces have been painted black. The swastikas have also been darkened as well as part of the Balkenkreuz. In order to make it even less visible, the engines have been equipped with flame covers.



Junkers Ju 87D-3 of the Gruppenstab of I./StG2 "Immelmann" at the beginning of the winter of 1942. The summer camouflage has been copiously covered with white paint rendering the markings and code barely visible. The D-3 was the most produced version of the Ju-87D and was notably characterised by its increased armour to protect the crew. This was made indispensable by its role of Schlachtflugzeug (ground support aircraft).



Fieseler Fi 156C-3 Storch of 1 (H) Pz/Aufkl. Gr.14, seen in Yugoslavia in April 1941. The photograph shows evidence of a standard camouflage comprising of green RLM 70/71 and light blue RLM 65. This austere and rather unattractive colour scheme is brightened up a little by a vertical yellow RLM 04 fuselage stripe, a colour that is found on the entire engine cowling and also, it would seem, on the small propeller spinner. Note also the absence of a MG 15 machine-gun.



Focke Wulf Fw 200C "Condor" of I./KG 40. Above all known for the role it played in the Battle of the Atlantic, the Condor participated no less, in their way, in the Battle of Britain, notably by laying mines around the British Isles. It was during such a mission that this plane was shot down over the east coast of England on 20 July 1940.



Henschel Hs 123A of I. (Schlacht)/LG 2 in 1941-42. The upper surfaces have been painted white and the original green camouflage only appears at the fuselage letter and the swastika. The undercarriage does not have its fairings to prevent it from being obstructed by mud or snow.



Messerschmitt Bf 110E. This aircraft of 5./ZG 1 "Wespen" was given the standard three grey camouflage (RLM 74, 75 and 76) before receiving a whitewash better adapted to the Russian Front which allows the original livery to show through in places. The nose bears the famous wasp and the rudder has an impressive tally of kills. This aircraft's pilot, lieutenant Kutscha, was credited with 47 kills, of which 22 were achieved flying the Zerstörer.



Junkers Ju 87G-1 flown by Oberstleutnant Hans Ulrich Rudel (St.G 2) on the Eastern Front in 1944. This pilot was credited with destroying more than 300 Soviet armoured vehicles obtained during 2,530 combat sorties. He is the best known of the pilots that flew this version of the famous Stuka, especially designed to destroy armour and equipped for this role with a pair of 37 mm cannon installed in underwing pods.



Junkers Ju 88A-4 of 8./KG 51 seen on the Eastern Front. The aircraft has the standard camouflage, but with the addition of a yellow fuselage stripe with only the lower surface wing tips also painted yellow. The first part of the circular cowling has also been painted in this colour whereas the propeller spinners are in red. A superb emblem of an edelweiss on a blue background is present on the sides of the fuselage, but is hidden here by the engines.



Fieseler Fi 156C-5 Storch, of an unknown unit on the Eastern Front in 1942. The aircraft, initially covered with the standard camouflage comprising of the green RLM 70/71 and light blue RLM 65, has been had a washable whitewash haphazardly applied with a flat brush. Much handling and the harsh weather conditions have led to the previous camouflage to show through in some places. Note that the cockpit glass frames have retained their original colour.



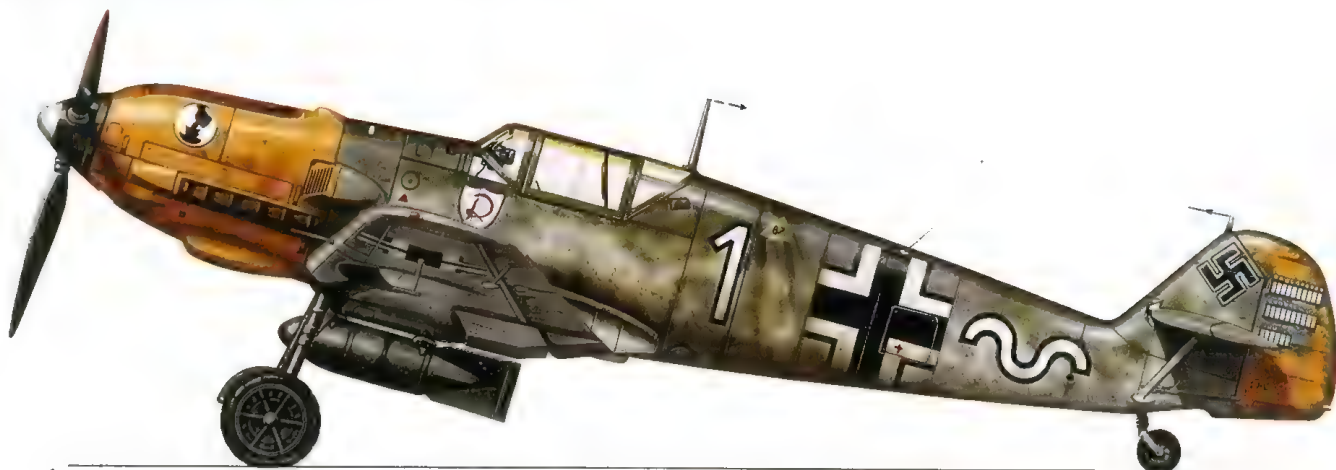
Henschel Hs 129B-1/R2 of Sch.G 1 in 1942. Originally designed as a ground-attack plane and "tank-buster", the Hs 129 was equipped with a great variety of weapons, from a 30 mm cannon to a monstrous 75 mm. Its armoured cockpit was particularly cramped and some of the instruments were placed outside, such as the sights positioned in front of the wind-shield.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 of 10 (Jabo). JG26 stationed at Saint-Omer and seen during the failed landings at Dieppe. These aircraft, along with the Fw 190A, raided along the English coastline.



Messerschmitt Bf 110 E of 4./NJG 1 seen in Belgium in 1942. The lower surfaces have been painted black, like most of the other night fighters, however, only the upper surfaces have been painted in the "naval" dark green (RLM 72), this temporary camouflage having been applied during operation "Donnerkeil". The red shark mouth on a black background adds a touch of originality, but also one of colour to this austere livery.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-7 of 7./JG 2 in the spring of 1940-41, France, flown by Ritterkreuzträger Obit. Werner Machold. The rudder bears the tally of 26 kills. Machold was shot down over England on 14 June 1941 and taken prisoner. Some sources credit him with 32 kills, but it seems that at the time of his capture, the 26 were the only confirmed kills. The E-7 was equipped with an ETC 500 rack under its belly that could carry a 250 kg bomb or a 300 litre fuel tank for deep penetration or attack missions.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-7 of 2./Sch. G & in Russia, 1942. The Emil, transformed into a bomber by the addition of bomb racks under the fuselage, regained all of its fighter qualities once it had dropped its bombs. It served within the Schlachtgeschwader (whose fuselage code was a black triangle) on the Eastern Front until the arrival of the FW 190.



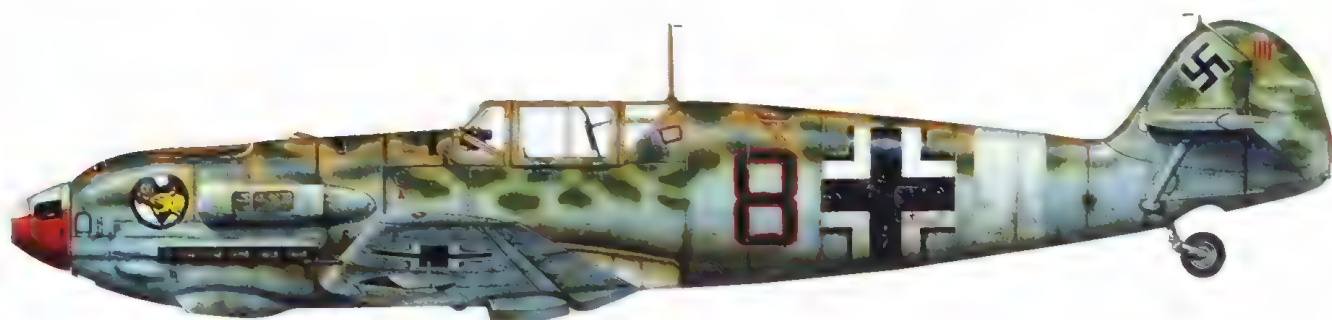
Junkers Ju 88D-1. A reconnaissance version based on the A-4. The bomb bays were closed up and held an extra fuel tank and photographic equipment. This aircraft belonged to the 2. (F)/22 operating on the Russian Front in the winter of 1942. The upper surfaces have received a wash of white paint over the original camouflage; this coat was fragile which explains the numerous alterations seen with this new livery. The aircraft has a yellow fuselage stripe as well as the lower surface wingtips, characteristic of the Eastern Front.



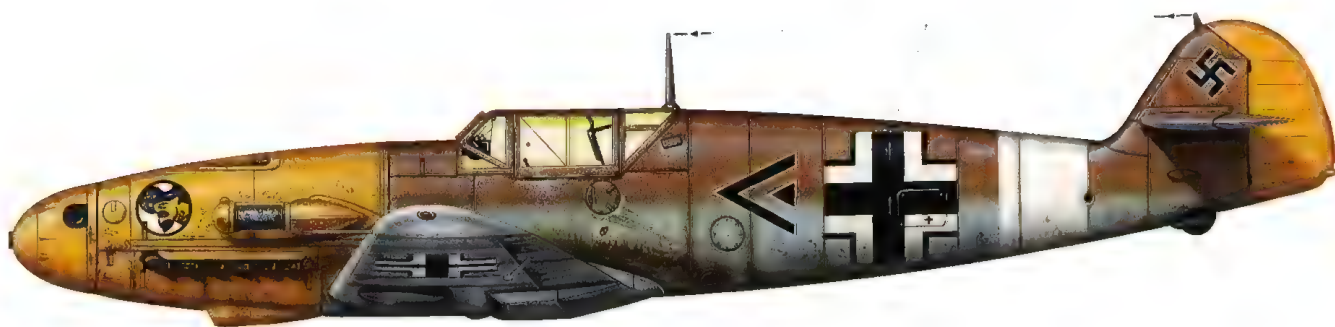
Messerschmitt Bf 109E-4 has kept the standard European camouflage scheme of grey 74/75/76. Only the characteristic Mediterranean



Focke Wulf Fw 190A-4 (W.Nr 611) of SG 2 or SG 10 in Tunisia 1943. The plane, a ground-attack fighter, is painted in RLM 79/78/76 and equipped with a tropical filter as well as an ETC 501 rack. The fuselage cross may have been touched up with grey-blue RLM 76.



Messerschmitt Bf 109E-7 is the often portrayed steed of Leutnant Werner Schroer. This aircraft has also been given a yellow propeller spinner, or perhaps black and yellow! The aircraft's upper surfaces are painted in sand-yellow RLM 79 and mottled with olive green RLM 80 on a light blue RLM 78 base. Schroer finished his career with a tally of 61 kills.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-2 "Trop" of I./JG 27 based at Martuba, Libya in December 1941. This aircraft was flown by Hauptmann Eduard Neuman who ended the war as commander of JG 27 with a tally of 13 kills. It has sky blue RLM 78 camouflage underneath and sand RLM 79 on the upper surfaces with a clear delimitation. The markings are limited to the insignia of the 1st Gruppe at the front and a double chevron the indicating the pilot's rank. The I. JG 27 arrived in Libya equipped with the Bf 109E in April 1941 before swapping them for the Friedrich the same year. The highest scoring aces in North Africa were Hans-Joachim Marseille (158 kills) and Hans Arnold (59 kills), both were killed in September 1942.



Junkers Ju 88A-4 of I./KG 77 anti-shipping aircraft. The standard camouflage of RLM 65, 70 and 71 has been covered with a scribble pattern that is seemingly in sand-yellow (RLM 79) for the upper surfaces and green-black (RLM 70) for the aircraft's lower surfaces. The swastikas, fuselage stripe and the Balkenkreuz have been given a coat of dark paint, probably black. On the other hand, the aircraft's white bordered black personal number has been kept. On the photograph we can see that the code ("EH") has been repainted on the exhaust flame covers.



Messerschmitt Bf 110E-3 of 2./Aufkl. Gr.14 in a livery typical of the African theatre. This comprises of the standard sand (RLM 79) and blue (RLM 78) to which is added green mottling, perhaps RLM 80. A photograph taken before this representation shows this aircraft without the mottling and with a wider white stripe that includes the second letter. We can see the armoured wind shield, the wider radiator intake and the air filter.



Junkers Ju 88A-4 "Trop" of 7/LG 1 seen in North Africa in 1942. The aircraft has the standard camouflage scheme of planes operating in Africa, comprising of sand-yellow (Sandgelb RLM 79) and blue (Hellblau RLM 78), brightened up with a white vertical fuselage stripe. On the other hand, the lower wing tips do not seem to have been painted white as is so often seen; the tip of the propeller spinners have also been painted white. Note that the stripe is very far back on the fuselage and in fact includes the last code letter.



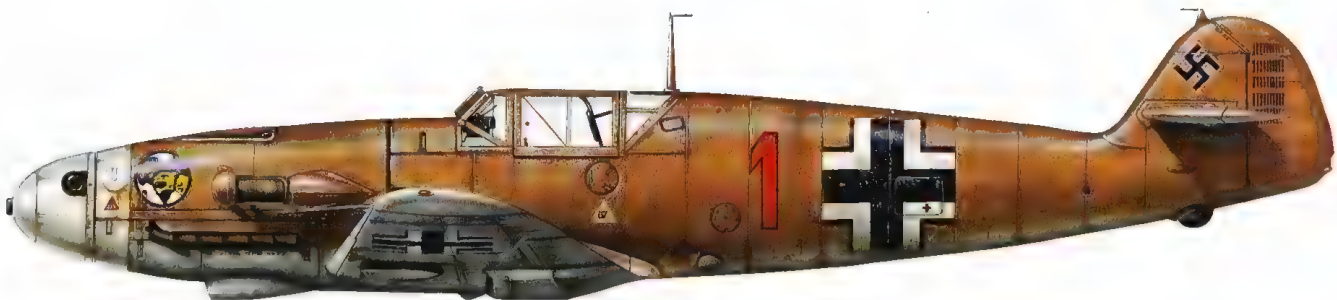
Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 operating in North Africa in 1942 has an interesting, or at least, unusual camouflage scheme. The standard scheme of RLM 79/78 has been given patches of what are probably olive green RLM 80. The propeller spinner is black and white and the front of the cowl has the emblem of JG 27 showing three yellow planes on a black cross instead of the traditional panther head.



Fieseler Fi 156C-3 Storch "Trop" of 2. (H)/14 seen in the spring of 1941. The aircraft, which was originally given a dark sand RLM 79 and light blue RLM 65 camouflage scheme, has been given green RLM 70 or RLM 71 patches on its upper surfaces. With its edelweiss emblem, white vertical fuselage stripe and rudder, this is without doubt the most attractive livery that a Storch ever bore. The 7.9 mm calibre MG 15 machine-gun is installed in the rotating turret.



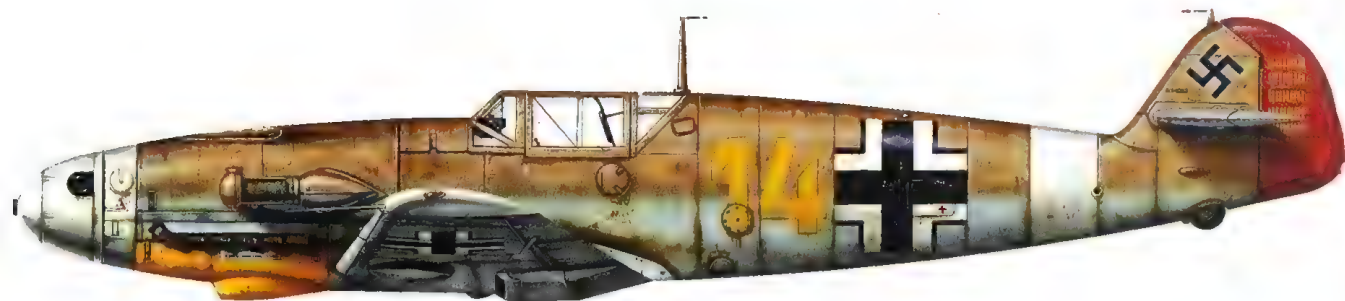
Henschel Hs 129B-2 of 8./Sch.G 2 in Libya. This unit was taken out of North Africa in July 1943 and transferred to Russia. The plane is camouflaged in sand RLM 79 with fuzzy green RLM 80 patches. Contrary to the usual camouflage scheme of these aircraft, the white of the tail is not in front of the cockpit. Although it was of a more modern design than the Stuka, the HS 129B was slower and had a shorter range than the Ju-87D. The standard armament of this aircraft consisted of two 7.9 mm MG 17 machine-guns placed in the wing roots, coupled with two 20 mm MG 151 cannon positioned on each side of the cockpit. This was complemented by an assortment of 50 or 250 kg antipersonnel bombs placed under the wings.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 "Trop". Seen in Egypt in the summer of 1942, this Me 109F-4 "Trop" belonged to Leutnant Hans A. Stahlschmidt of the 2./ JG 27. The rudder bears the tally of 48 kills. The camouflage is entirely sand-yellow RLM 79 except, of course, for the lower surfaces that remain in light blue RLM 78. Both sides of the wing tips are painted white. Stahlschmidt was an excellent pilot and was shot down a few days before the accidental death of his friend Marseille.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 "Trop". Another of H.J. Marseille's steeds portrayed at the beginning of June 1942. The propeller spinner is yellow and white and only the lower half of the engine cowling is yellow. The rudder bears the tally of 68 kills and soon will not be big enough to take the 90 other kills to come.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 is one of the many planes flown by the famous Leutnant, then Staffelkapitän, Hans J. Marseille of 3./JG 27, seen here in Libya. The clear edged camouflage is demarcated by sand-yellow RLM 79 for the upper surfaces and light blue RLM 78 for the lower part of the fuselage. The lower surfaces of the wing tips are painted white. The rudder is dark red, no doubt the result of a mixture using RLM 23. It bears the tally of fifty kills.



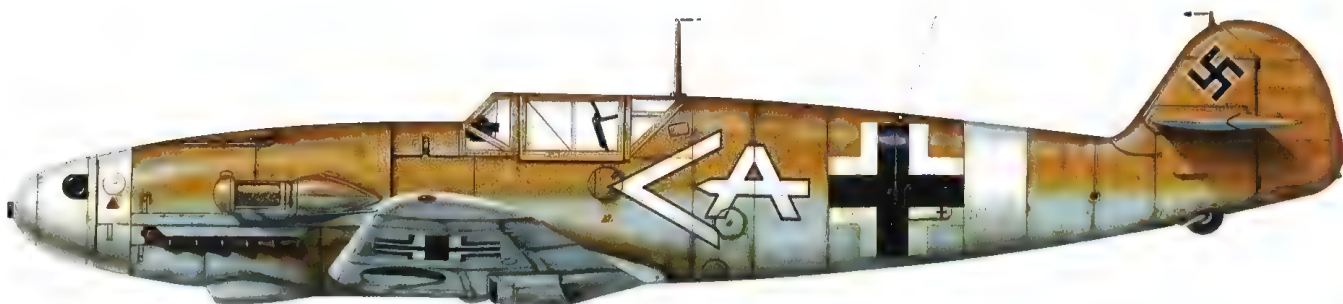
Messerschmitt Bf 109E-7 of 1./JG 27 was flown by Oblt. Ludwig Franzisket in 1941. The camouflage scheme consists of patches of sand-yellow RLM 79 and olive green RLM 80 on a light blue RLM 78 base. The rudder bears the tally of 22 kills. The entire forward cowlings, as well as the rudder, are in yellow RLM 04.



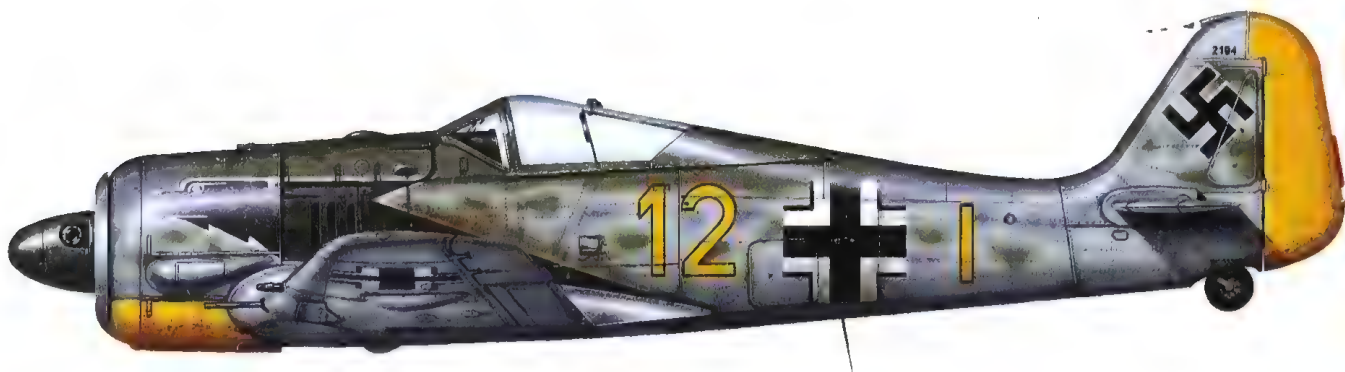
Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 flown by OFW Schultz who achieved 51 kills before being killed on 17 June 1942. On the black and white photograph used as a reference, the demarcation between the two shades of sand and blue (very faded) can barely be distinguished. The cowling, with its Berlin bear, appears to be in another tone, probably yellow and the propeller spinner is entirely black. The British lion being shot in the behind is the insignia of the Stab of II./JG 27.



Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4 The aircraft's nose is decorated with the emblematic Berlin bear. The number and the horizontal stripe of the 2nd Gruppe, that appear to be of a light colour in black and white photographs, are probably yellow. A rare thing is that the wing tips are not painted white.



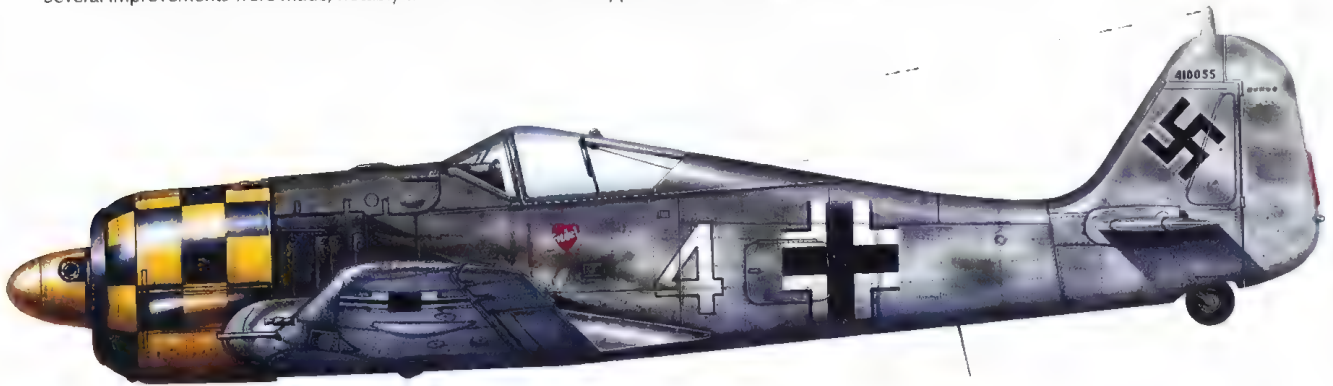
Messerschmitt Bf 109F-4/Z "Trop" flown by Hauptmann Werner Schroer during the winter of 1942 in Libya. The decoration is rather unorthodox with the white fuselage stripe touching the Balkenkreuz and the now white chevron edged in black and the stylised A that identifies the aircraft as that of the deputy group commander.



Focke Wulf Fw 190A-3 "yellow 12" of 9. Staffel of the III. Gruppe of JG 2 seen in France, in Normandy to be exact, in 1942. The plane bears the famous and beautiful white edged black eagle. The standard camouflage scheme comprises of grey green RLM 74, grey purple RLM 75 and sky blue RLM 76. This aircraft has been portrayed many times and some people express doubts as to the colour of its markings, affirming sometimes that the latter were white. One only has to take a good look at the photographs to see that the colour is darker than the white of the Balkenkreuz and close, in density, to the yellow of the rudder. The sunlight on the fuselage can indeed render this observation difficult, but a close look leaves no doubt as to the colour used. The A-3 began its career in March 1942 with II./JG 26 and was characterised by its more powerful engine and above all by its two 20 mm cannon added under the wings. It later equipped the only Luftwaffe wing based on the Western Front, JG 2.



Focke Wulf Fw 190A-4 "black 4". Belonging to JG 54, this Fw 190A-4 "black 4", based in the region of Leningrad, has the classic winter camouflage covering the standard scheme. We can see from photographs that this coat has particularly suffered, but apparently less from the weather conditions than the amount of work undertaken by the mechanics. Indeed we can see that the most damaged areas are those concerning maintenance and correspond to the cockpit points of access. Curiously, the famous "green heart" (Grünherz), the emblem of this Geschwader, does not appear to have been painted on this aircraft. The A-4 appeared in the summer of 1942 and its engine was equipped with water-injection system destined to increase its performance. Several improvements were made, notably at the tail unit with the appearance of an aerial on the tail fin.



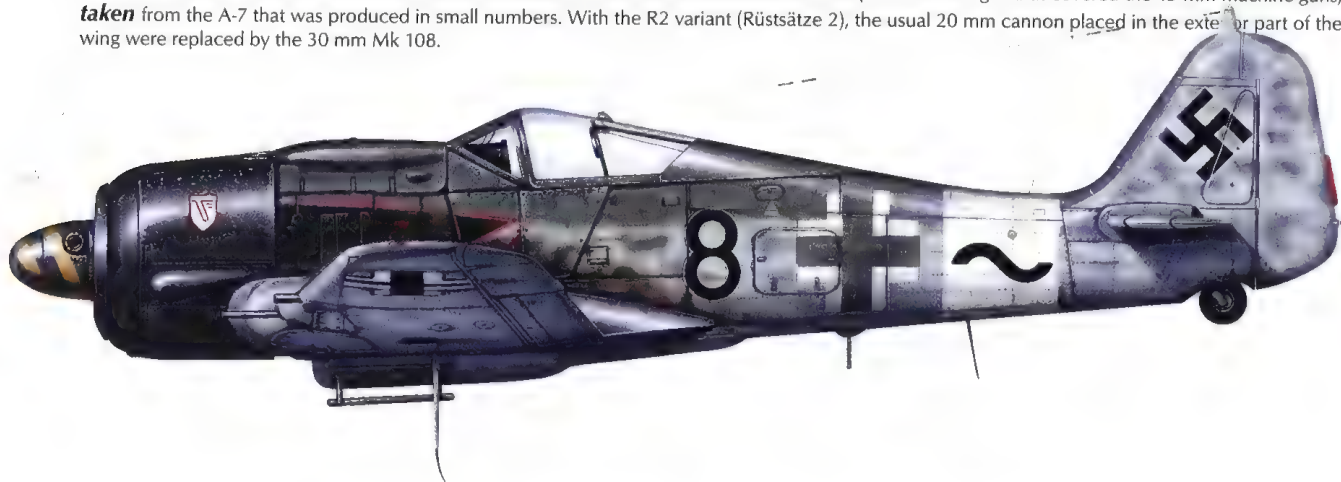
Focke Wulf Fw 190A-5 "white 4". The Fw 190A-5 flown by Bernard Kunze of the 1./JG 1 is the object of much controversy concerning, amongst others, the colours of the engine cowling, seen here in black and yellow chequered pattern. Some believe that the latter was black and white, or that the black squares were simply painted over the light colour of the camouflage. Another contentious subject is the "white 4" which could also be the "white 1". In any case, without new photographs, any supposition is in vain. The rudder bears the tally of five kills and the red heart has the inscription of "Friedel". The A-5 version appeared at the beginning of 1943 and is instantly recognisable by its engine block that was placed 15 cm further forward to correct the centre of gravity and reduce vibrations.



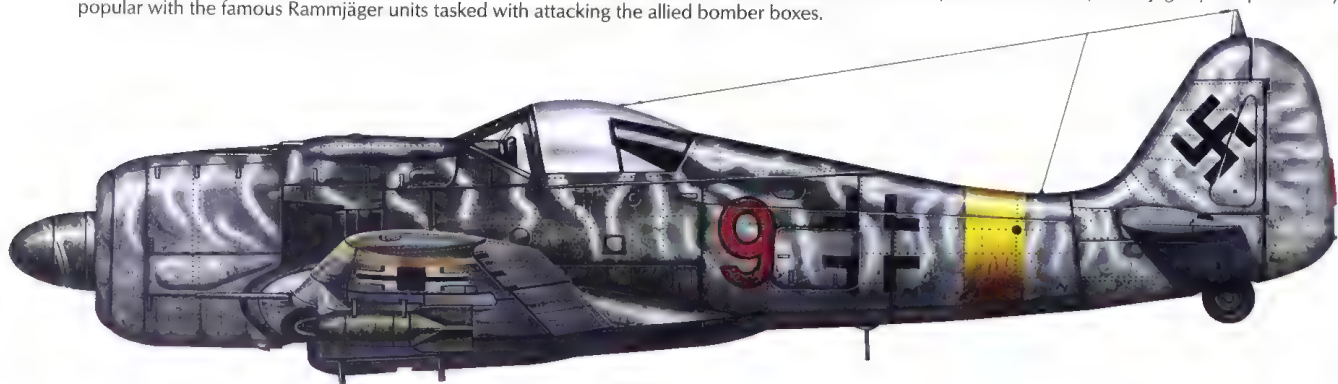
Focke Wulf Fw 190A-6 of Anton Hackl, commander of III./JG 11, seen here in Germany in April 1944, has been portrayed many times in various ways. Compared with our illustration, others show the lower engine cowling painted yellow, a slightly different sized fuselage stripe and the background of the shield and red dragon either green or black. Both sides of the rudder bear the tally of 41 kills, to which are added the other hundred over the Iron Cross with oak leaves. Note that the original camouflage remains visible between the legs of the swastikas. The A-6 was one of the major versions of the Fw 190 and made its appearance in June 1943. It was characterised by its new, lighter wings armed with four rapid firing 20 mm cannon.



Focke Wulf Fw 190A-8/R2 "yellow 12". This very colourful Fw 190A-8/R2 named "Muschi" of the 6./II JG 300, was flown by Unteroffizier Paul Lixfeld and is seen here in Germany during the winter of 1944. We can also (of course) find a few differences depending on illustrations, notably with the cowl ring and the first part of the engine cowlings painted entirely yellow, as well as the background colour of the shield also painted in this colour. Note that the armoured plating is light grey RLM 02 or bare metal depending on opinion, plus the particularly damaged paintwork near the cockpit. From the outside, the A-8 was characterised by its panel placed in front of the wind-shield with its prominent bulges that covered the 13 mm machine-guns, **taken** from the A-7 that was produced in small numbers. With the R2 variant (Rüstsätze 2), the usual 20 mm cannon placed in the exterior part of the wing were replaced by the 30 mm Mk 108.



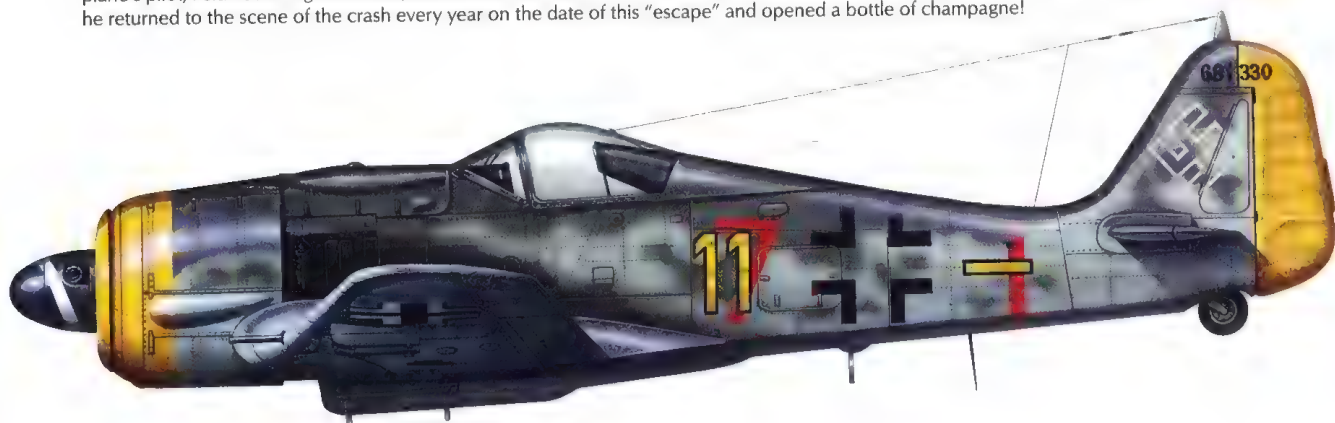
Focke Wulf Fw 190A-8/R8 "black 8". This was the aircraft of Unteroffizier Willy Maximowitz of the IV./Sturm JG 3 "Udet" stationed at the Dreux airfield in 1944. It too, has been portrayed many times due to its particularly attractive livery. The latter does not need any particular comment as everybody seems to agree as to the camouflage schemes and decoration. We will only point out that the colour of the Balkenkreuz is not the usual black, but painted in RLM 74, or in a similar tone. The R-8 variant, with its 30 mm cannon and extra armour copied from the R7 ("Sturmjäger") was particularly popular with the famous Rammjäger units tasked with attacking the allied bomber boxes.



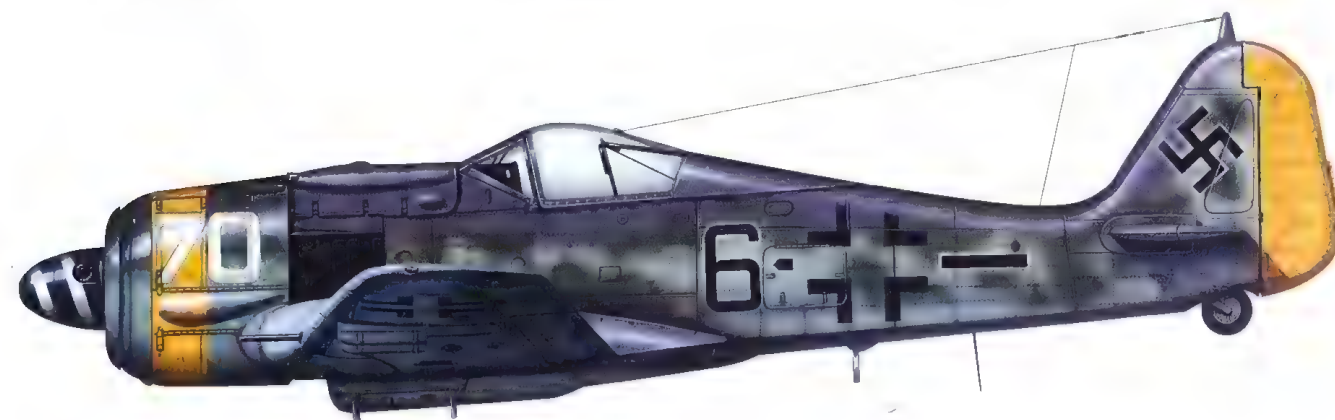
Focke Wulf Fw 190F-8/R1 of Schlachtgeschwader 2 (SG 2) in Hungary during the winter of 1944-1945. This plane, whose original camouflage has been whitewashed, has a yellow chevron under the left wing specific to this unit. The ground-attack 190F-8 was very similar to the A-8 fighter except for its wing armament and was mainly characterised by its cowlings bulges. The R1 designation indicates that four ETC 50 bomb racks have been placed under the wings, as well as the ETC 50t rack.



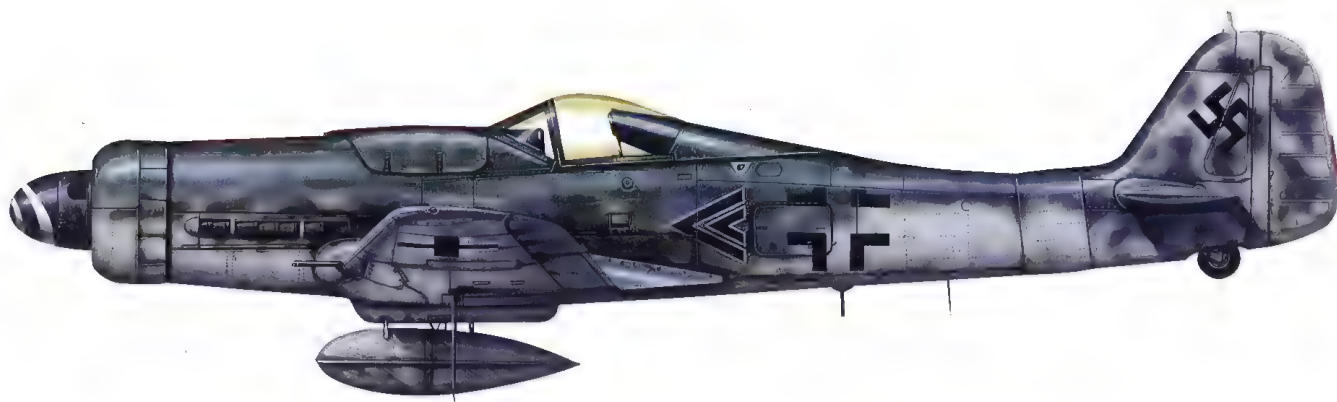
Focke Wulf Fw 190F-8 of 5./SG 2 seen in Germany, and more precisely at Aufhausen in the spring of 1945. This aircraft has a very unusual livery; most of the surfaces have been left in bare metal with only the upper wing surfaces and the stabilizers given a camouflage apparently made up of grey RLM 74 and RLM 75. The rudder appears not to have the usual red RLM 23, but rather a reddish glaze. In order to escape from the Soviet troops, this plane's pilot, Feldwebel Eugen Lörcher, crash-landed at the American held airfield at Aufhausen, with his fiancé in the rear of the fuselage. After the war, he returned to the scene of the crash every year on the date of this "escape" and opened a bottle of champagne!



Focke Wulf Fw 190F-8 belonging to an unidentified unit, spring 1945. The camouflage appears to be made up of RLM 75 Grauviolett and RLM 83 Dunkelgrün, applied in mottles on RLM 76 Lichtblau. Note the white painted outline of the swastika and the new code, hastily painted over the previous one. We also note that a little more than a third of the engine cowl is painted yellow, whereas usually, only the first part of this cowl is painted.



Focke Wulf Fw 190F-8 of Stab (staff) SG (Schlachtgeschwader/ground-attack squadron) 10, at Budweis (now Budejovice) in Czechoslovakia, spring 1945. The camouflage is classically made up of the RLM 75/83/76 combination. Note behind the "Black 6", the very short and unusual size of the black dash. The cowl has a "white 70" and is partly painted yellow; the first part has not been repainted, which leads us to suppose that it has been taken from another aircraft. The yellow cowl stripe and rudder are both identification markings that German aircraft were made to use from September 1944 onwards. The Stabschwarm marking, in the shape of a short black dash painted on the fuselage is unusual.



Focke Wulf Fw 190D-9. We know very little about this Fw 190D-9 that may have belonged to JG 6. The three-colour camouflage scheme in use, RLM 76/75/76, is completed by patches of RLM 81, notably at the rear of the fuselage and the tail unit. The double chevron of the Gruppen Kommandeur appears to have been painted over a previous marking. This aircraft was discovered by the Americans in Bavaria in the summer of 1945.



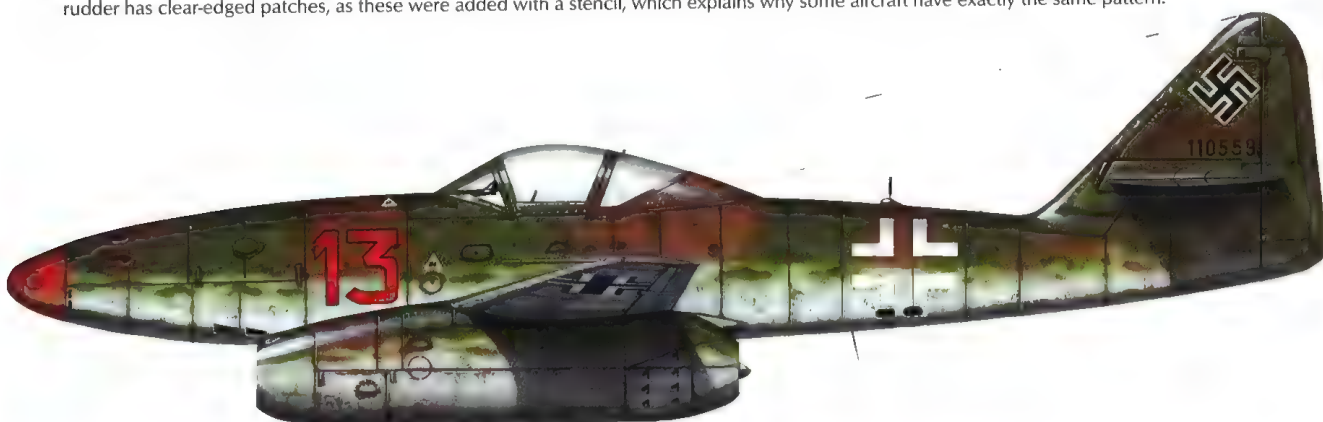
Arado Ar 234 of I./Versuchsverband der Oberkommando der Luftwaffe. The Germans, not having any precise information on the exact situation due to a total absence of aerial reconnaissance, sent a prototype of the twin-engine Arado 234 (V-5) over Normandy, carrying out its first mission on 20 July 1944 after having flown from Germany to the Juvincourt airfield in the east of France. This aircraft did not have any undercarriage and took off using a wheeled trolley, then landing on retractable skids.



Messerschmitt Me 262A-1 Schwalbe of JG 7 "Nowotny". As the black chevron painted on the fuselage indicates, this aircraft was flown by the Gruppenadjutant (the deputy unit commander). Kommando Nowotny, named after the famous Luftwaffe ace, was the first unit to use the Schwalbe in combat at the beginning of October 1944. After the death of its leader the following month, the group was re-formed as JG 7 and served until the end of the war. This Schwalbe, armed with two WGr 21 rocket-launchers under the front of the fuselage, has a most unusual camouflage scheme comprising of green horizontal scribbles on its fuselage.



Messerschmitt Me 262A1 of KG(J) 54 in 1945. When the KG 54 «Totenkopf» (death's head) was reformed and equipped with the Me 262, in October 1944, it was initially designated «Schnelle (fast) KG 54», then KG(J) 54 beginning in January 1945, the letter J being added for Jagd (hunt) whereas the squadron had previously been used for bombing missions. The fuselage is in all probability painted in green RLM83 over a pale grey base (RLM 76). The rudder has clear-edged patches, as these were added with a stencil, which explains why some aircraft have exactly the same pattern.



Messerschmitt Me 262A-1 Schwalbe of III./EJG 2. Lechfeld (Germany) at the beginning of 1945. The "red 13" was the personal aircraft of Major Heinrich "Heinz" Bär who, in January 1945, became Kommandeur of the Ergänzungs Jagdgeschwader 2 an advanced training unit for future Schwalbe pilots that was quickly transformed into an operational fighter group. Bär, whose every plane bore the number 13, achieved thirteen kills with EG 2 and ended the war in the famous JV 44 with the rank of Oberst and a tally of 221 kills. Although he survived the war, he was killed in a flying accident on 28 April 1957 when carrying out acrobatics on the anniversary of his 200th kill.



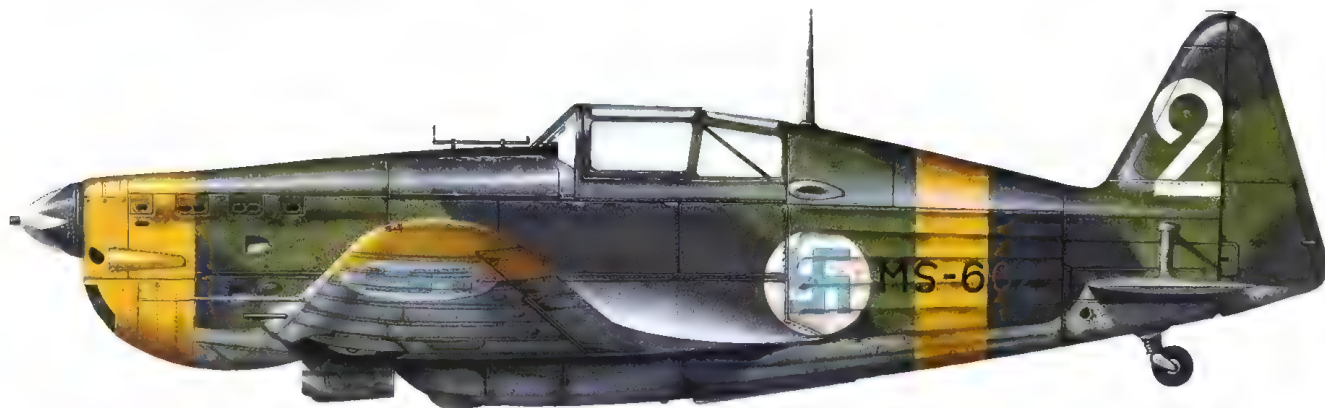
Me 262A-1a flown by Lt. Franz Schall, commander of the famous "Kommando Nowotny" at Hesepe in October 1944. This pilot, transferred from the Eastern Front where he achieved the respectable tally of 123 kills, was integrated into this elite group with the Me 262 and shot down 14 enemy aircraft before his death on 10 April 1945 when making an emergency landing at Parchim.



Fokker D.XXI of the 5th squadron of LLv 24 seen at Imola in 1939. When Finland attempted to modernise its air forces, it had to fall back on buying this type of aircraft from 1937 onwards from the Dutch, as the great powers, feeling that a war was imminent, refused to cede part of their aircraft production. However, the Finns used this type of aircraft, albeit with some modifications, notably in the armament, with success as many kills were achieved with this aircraft that was obsolete compared to Soviet models such as the I-16. Some pilots even became aces flying this aircraft. The stubborn will to defend their country and better pilot training are no doubt at the origin of these successes.



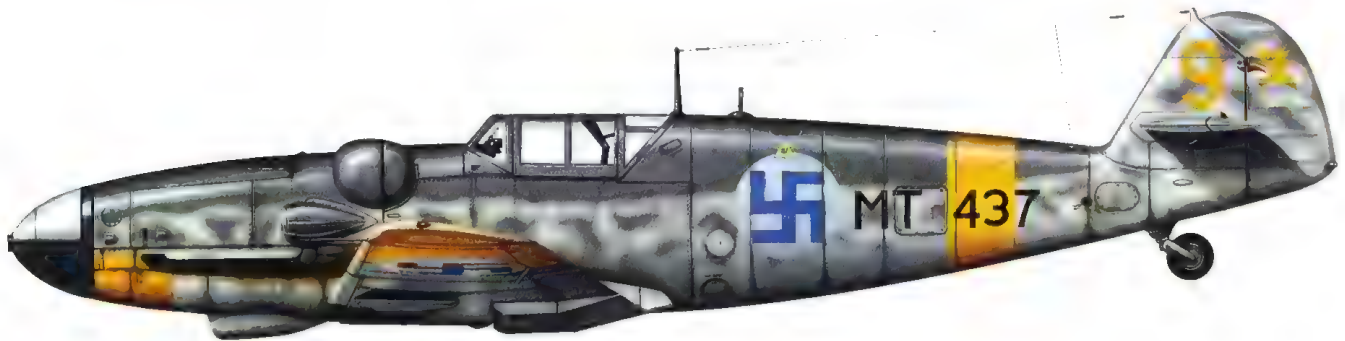
Morane Saulnier MS 410 "red 2" flown by the Finish ace Martti Kalima, coded MS-622 with a tally of eleven kills painted on the rudder and a red propeller spinner. Some sources show this aircraft also equipped with Bronzavia manifolds. The dark Finish camouflage, brightened up by yellow markings, is nevertheless more attractive than the French colours that some of these planes had at the beginning of 1940. The difference between the Morane 406 and the 410 lays mostly in the change of engine. The exterior aspect of the aircraft shows only one difference with the addition of a fixed radiator.



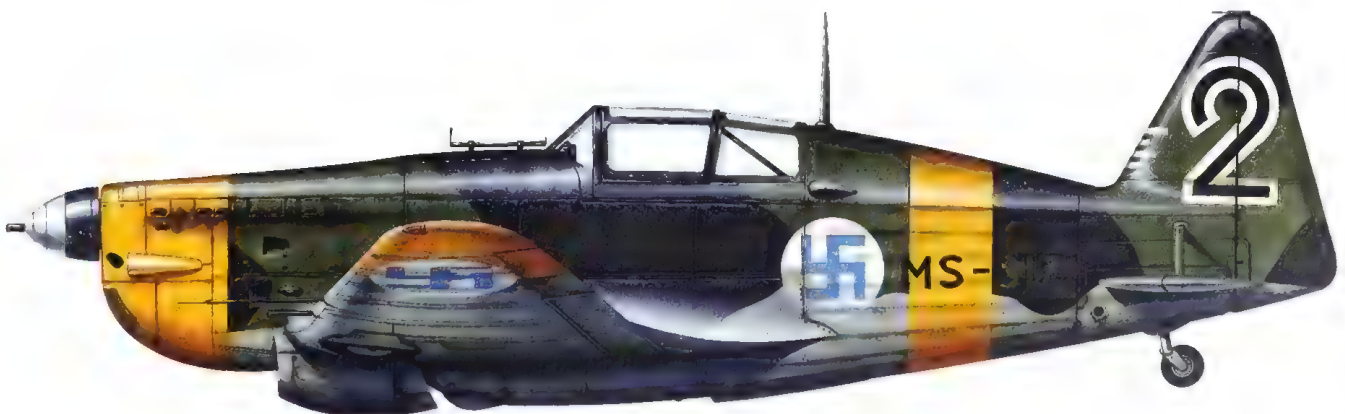
Morane Saulnier MS 406 "white 2" coded MS-602, flown by Lieutenant Martti Iehmo in 1941. The aircraft has the standard camouflage of Finish aircraft, this being light blue for the lower surfaces and dark green and black for the upper wing surfaces and the fuselage, with yellow markings. The propeller spinner has what appears to be a white star on what was initially a black base.



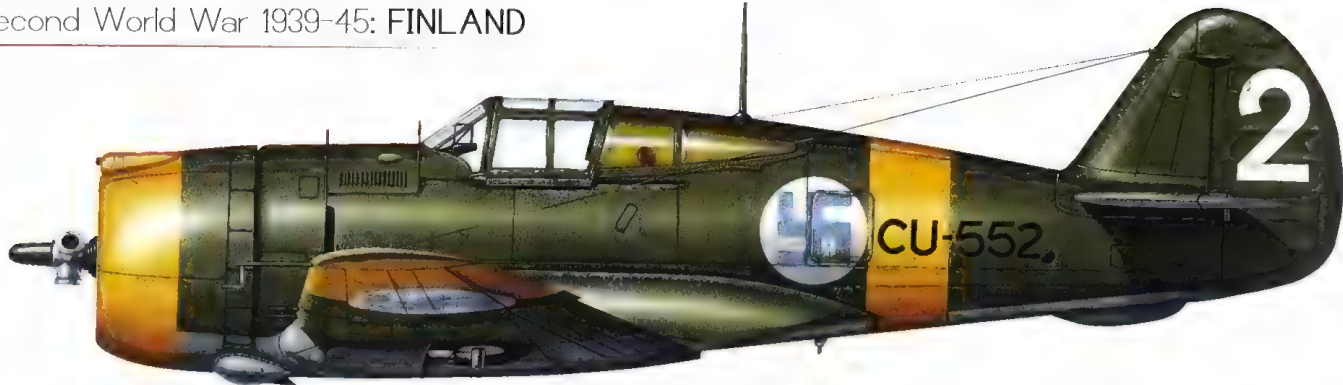
Polikarpov I-16 type 6. This aircraft initially belonged to the Soviets, but was captured from the enemy in March 1942 and repainted in Finnish colours. Attached to Lentolaivue 30, the IR-101 was first given a few modifications. Initially equipped with skis, these were removed and replaced with wheels, however, as the undercarriage could not be retracted, two recovered landing gear were installed. The rear skid was replaced with a tail wheel. To begin with this aircraft received the Finnish camouflage scheme of green-black/olive green and was next given yellow identification markings. The type 5 was powered by a 730 hp M-251 engine and its wing armament comprised of two 7.62 mm ShKAS machine-guns.



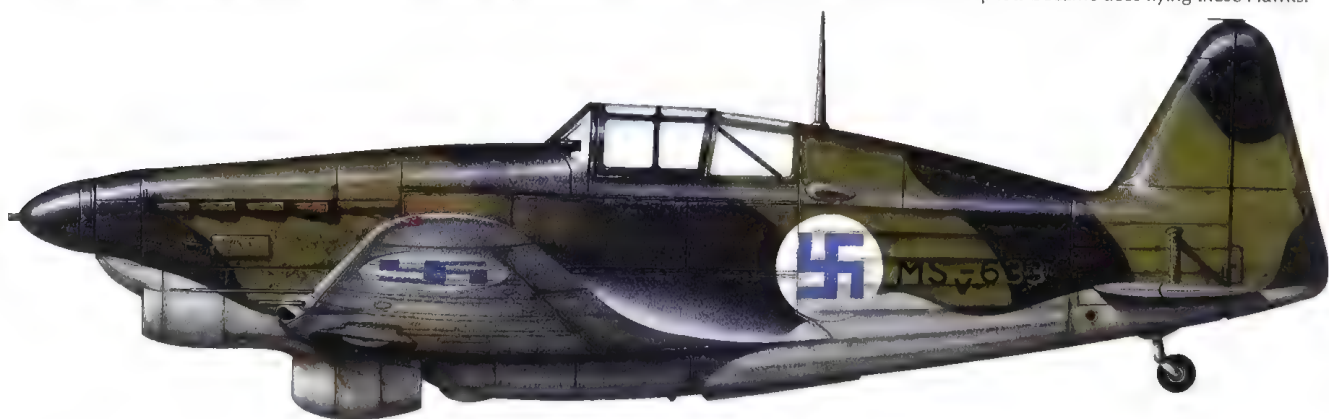
Messerschmitt Bf 109G-6 flown by Kersantti (sergeant) Ahokas of the 3rd Squadron of HleLv 24. The aircraft has the standard German camouflage (grey RLM 74, 75 and 76) along with a yellow fuselage stripe, wing tips and lower cowling. It also bears a head known as "Lynx" on the rudder. At the end of 1942, Germany finally agreed to the insistent requests of the Finns to purchase the Messerschmitt. A selection of pilots were sent to Germany for training and in the spring of 1943 thirty Bf 109G headed for Finland.



Morane Saulnier MS 406 flown by Luutnantti (lieutenant) Myllylä, one of the veterans of the "Winter War" and belonging for a while to the 1st squadron of LeLv 28 in 1942 and with which he only had time to achieve one and a half kills. At the end of the war, this talented pilot had a total of 21 kills. In 1940, France donated fifty aircraft, of which only thirty were received and which were assembled in Sweden by French mechanics, before going to Finland. At the beginning they had the standard French camouflage, before being given a new specific livery such as the one portrayed here.



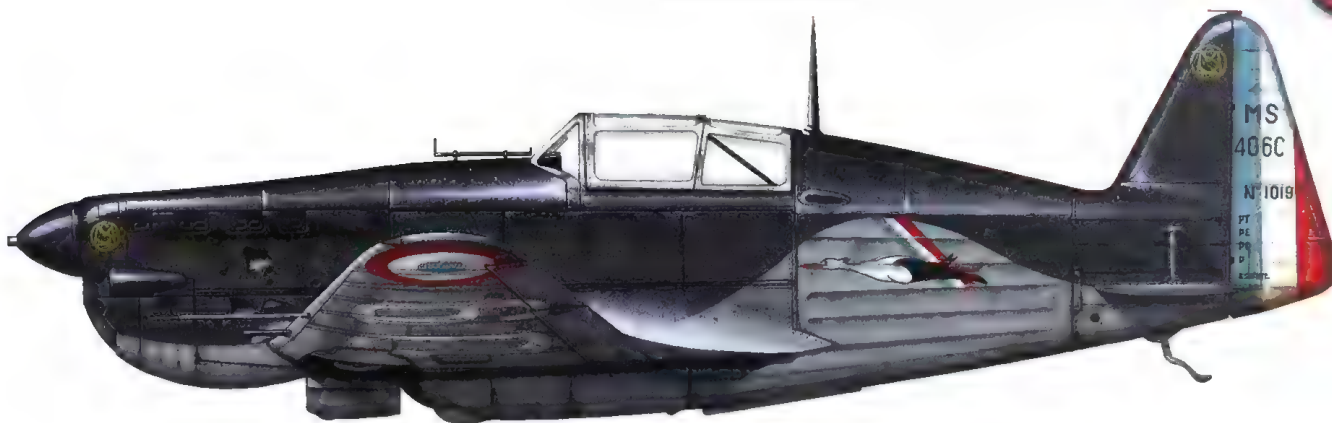
Curtiss Hawk H-75A-3, seen here in 1942 and belonging to the 2nd squadron of LeLv 32. This aircraft was flown by Luutnantti (lieutenant) Tervo, a Finish ace credited with 23 kills, of which 15.5 were achieved. He disappeared whilst flying a Bf 109G-2, probably shot down by flak and not in a dogfight. The Curtiss aircraft came from French and Norwegian stocks and were delivered to the Finns equipped with a Wright Cyclone A-4 engine that was replaced on reception by a more powerful Twin Wasp that was built under licence at the time. Several Finish pilots became aces flying these Hawks.



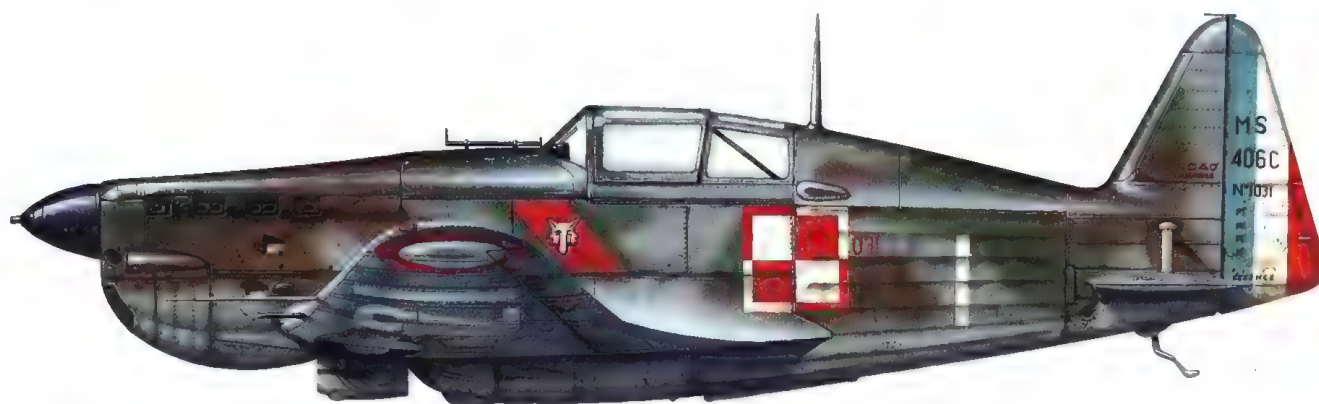
Mörkö Moraani seen in east Finland at the beginning of 1945. The aircraft bears the green and black camouflage in use. The Mörkö Morane (meaning "Bogey Morane" in Finnish) was the result of a request by the commander of Lentorykmentti 2 who found the MS 406 too slow and with general performances that were inferior to the Soviet aircraft. It was, therefore, decided to equip some airframes with a 1,100 hp Klimov M-105 engine (that of the Yak 1 and 3 amongst others) that the Finns had in stock. The aircraft performed well, but was nonetheless handicapped by very serious problems of oil cooling and the engine. The design of a new liquid cooling radiator was satisfactory and it was, therefore, decided to convert all of the "airworthy" MS 406/410 into the Mörkö Morane. At the end of the program, 41 aircraft of this type were available and they flew until the beginning of the 1950s.



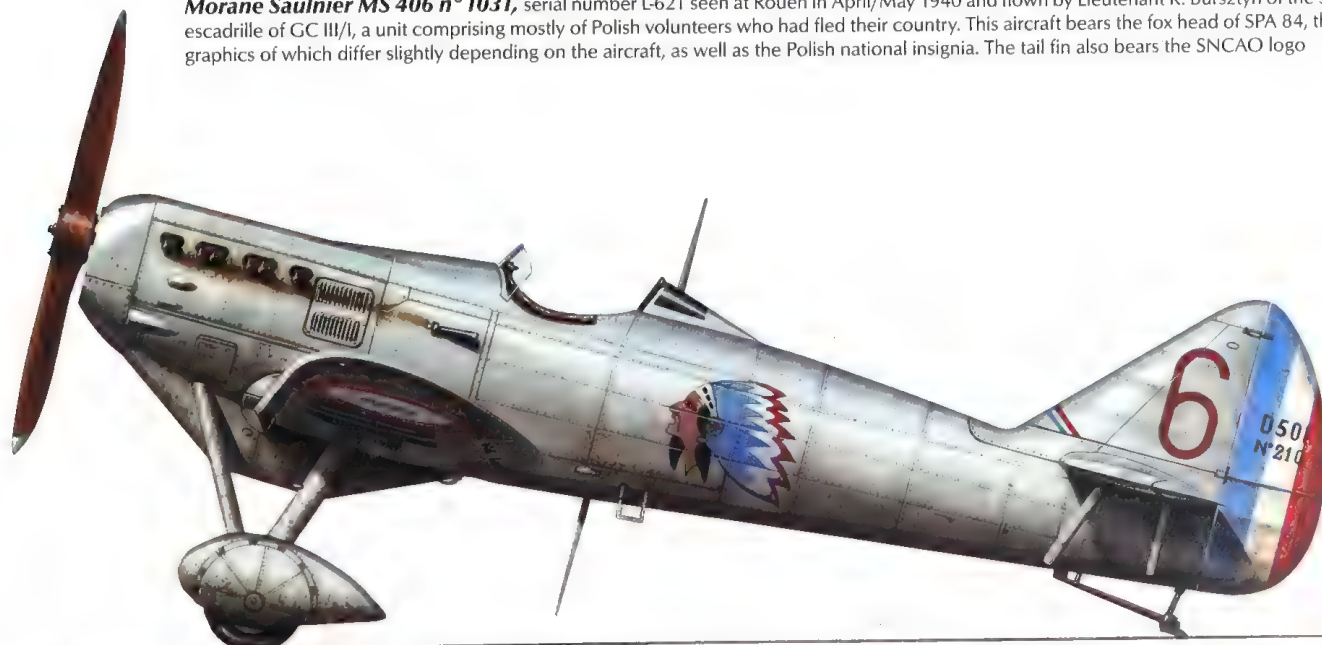
Brewster Model 239 Buffalo flown by Hans Wind of the 3rd Squadron of LeLv in 1944. This pilot was credited with 75 kills throughout the war, of which 39 were achieved with this type of aircraft. Amongst the countries that came to the aid of Finland, the United States accepted, after much negotiation, to supply 44 Brewster 239 that it no longer needed as, in the meantime, the US Navy had been equipped with an improved version of the F2A. The Brewsters were sold at a reasonable price and sent by ship to Sweden where they were assembled before going to Finland. The Finish pilots particularly liked this aircraft of which they managed to exploit the slightest quality, achieving an impressive number of kills.



Morane Saulnier MS 406 n° 1019, serial number L-609, in 1939. This aircraft, nicknamed "Le Pirate", with its very particular livery, belonged to General Pinsard, a Great War ace and commander of the Groupe de Chasse (fighter-group) GC II/6. On some photographs, this aircraft can be seen with Bronzavia manifolds. The cockpit hood appears to have been stripped of its paint and left bare, but some sources point out that it could have been green based colour. Note that the Morane-Saulnier logo is placed both on the aircraft's nose and tail fin.



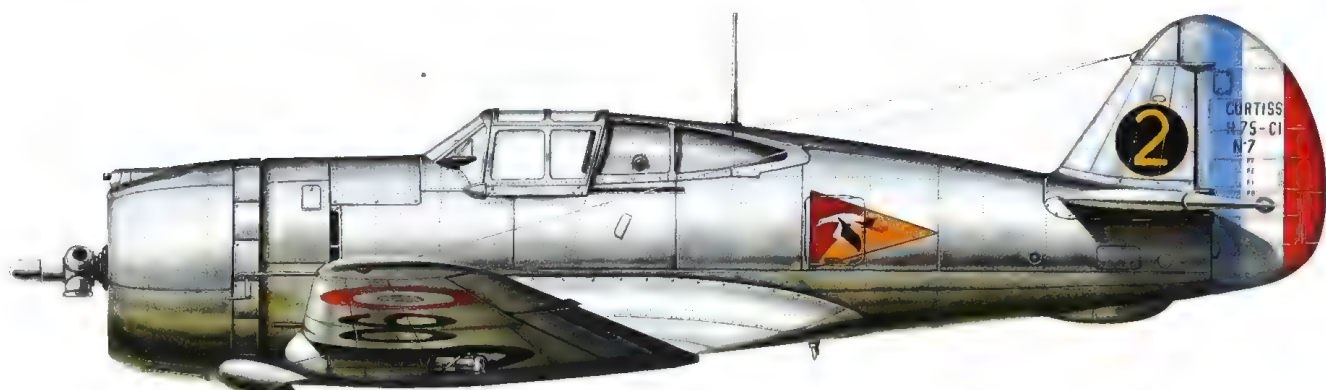
Morane Saulnier MS 406 n° 1031, serial number L-621 seen at Rouen in April/May 1940 and flown by Lieutenant K. Bursztyn of the 5e escadrille of GC III/I, a unit comprising mostly of Polish volunteers who had fled their country. This aircraft bears the fox head of SPA 84, the graphics of which differ slightly depending on the aircraft, as well as the Polish national insignia. The tail fin also bears the SNCAO logo



Dewoitine D. 501 n° 210 of the 3^e escadrille of GC II/5 at Reims-Courcy at the beginning of 1938. The Dewoitine D.500 and D.501 were the last fixed undercarriage and open cockpit fighters used by the "Lafayette" squadron. The "Sioux" head is once more different, as much in shape as in colour, whilst the swastika has re-appeared on the side of the coiffe/fairing?



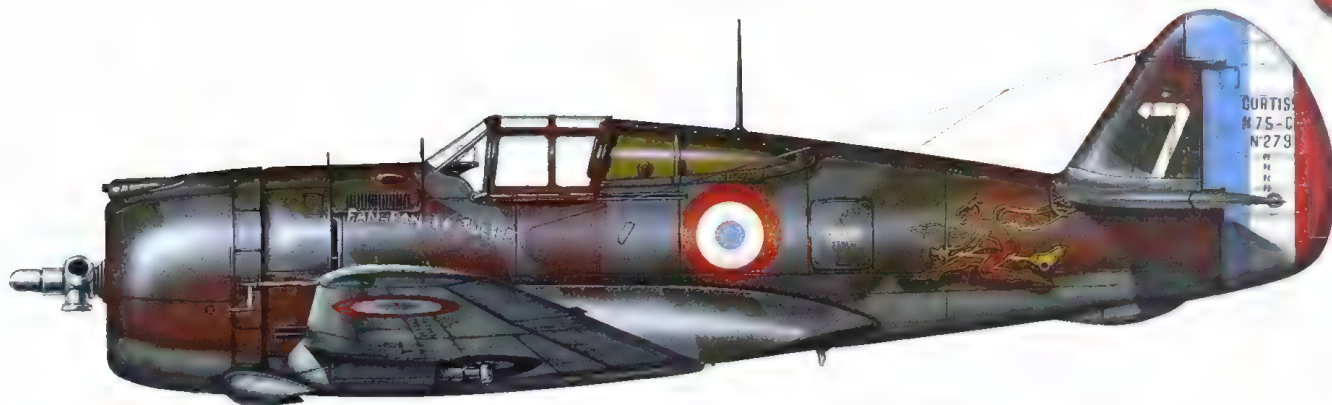
Morane Saulnier MS 406 n°871 of the patrouille de DAT at Avord in 1940, the different camouflage scheme of which appears without doubt to be grey-blue underneath with probably green and brown patches applied haphazardly. The aircraft's number is logically in red, but this is in no case a certitude. Judging from the photograph, the aircraft appears to be very clean, no doubt freshly painted.



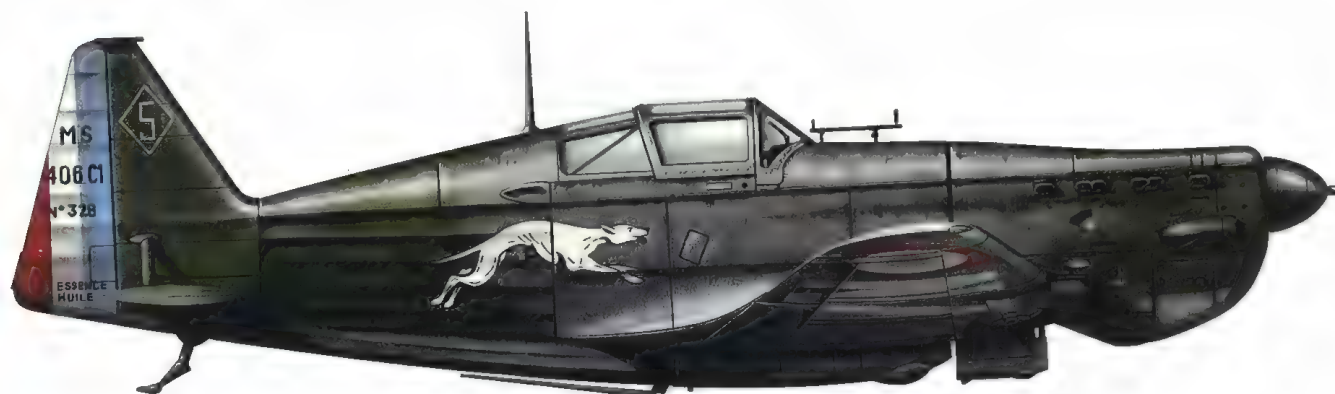
Curtiss H-75A-1 of the 1er escadrille of GC I/5 and flown by Edmond Marin La Meslée, considered to be the highest scoring ace of the Battle of France with 16 confirmed kills and four probables. The aircraft, freshly delivered from the United States, seen here at Reims in 1939, has not been painted and still does not have the anti-reflection panel in front of the engine cowling. As stipulated by the regulations of the time, the fuselage does not have any roundels and only has the insignia of the 1re escadrille of GC I/5, the "flying stork" on a brown and "tango" (orange) pennant of SPA 67.



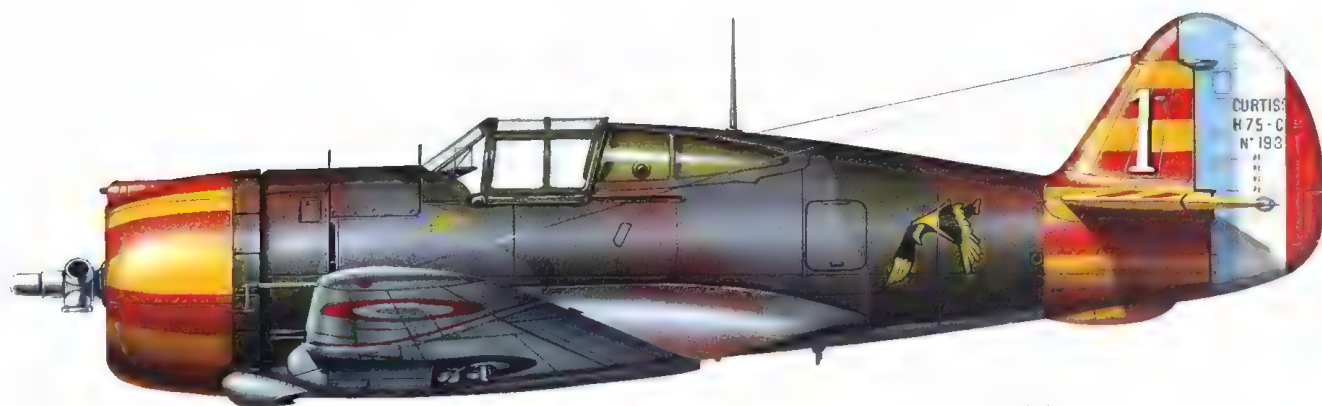
Curtiss H-75A-1 n°35 of the 3^e escadrille of GC II/5. Toul-Croix de Metz, September 1939. The "Lafayette" was the second French fighter group to be equipped with the Curtiss, a few months before the war broke out, in June 1939. The A-1 version was characterised on the outside by its armament that was reduced to two wing mounted machine-guns, as well as two placed on the engine cowl. As stipulated by the regulations of the time, the aircraft's fuselage did not have any roundels, but these were introduced at the beginning of 1940, with the squadron insignia being moved slightly, whereas it should have been placed on the tail fin. Note the unusual width of the fuselage stripe the colour of which is characteristic of the 3rd (in fact the first) of the group.



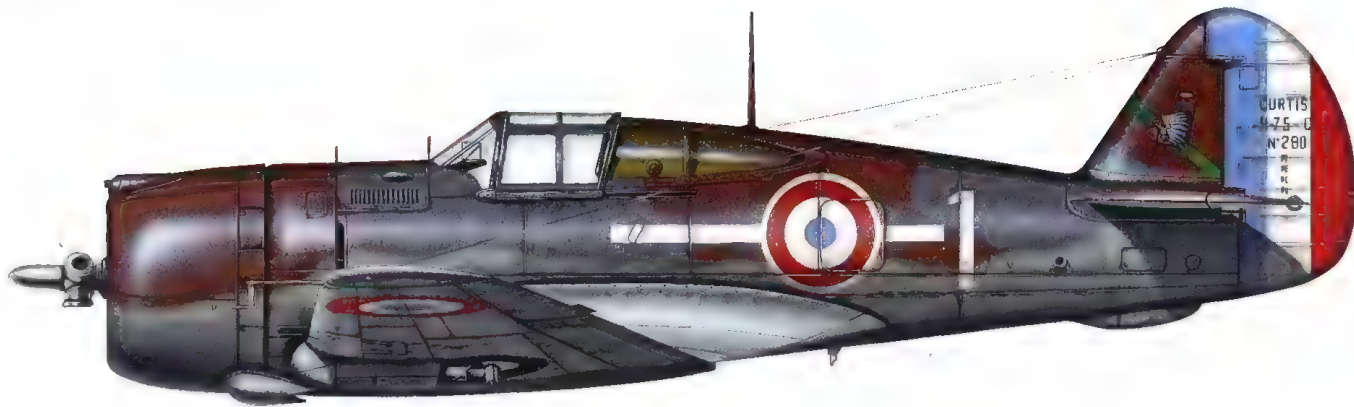
Curtiss H-75A-3 of the 3^e escadrille of GC II/4 (Diables Rouges), "Red Devils", based at Marignane in 1940 flown by Sergent-Chef Antoine Casenobe and named "Fanfan la Tulipe". This pilot, who achieved one of the Armée de l'Air's first kills in September 1939, ended the French campaign with a tally of seven confirmed kills. He was killed whilst flying another Curtiss, a P-40, in 1943 when having joined the Armée de l'Air newly re-formed as the AFN.



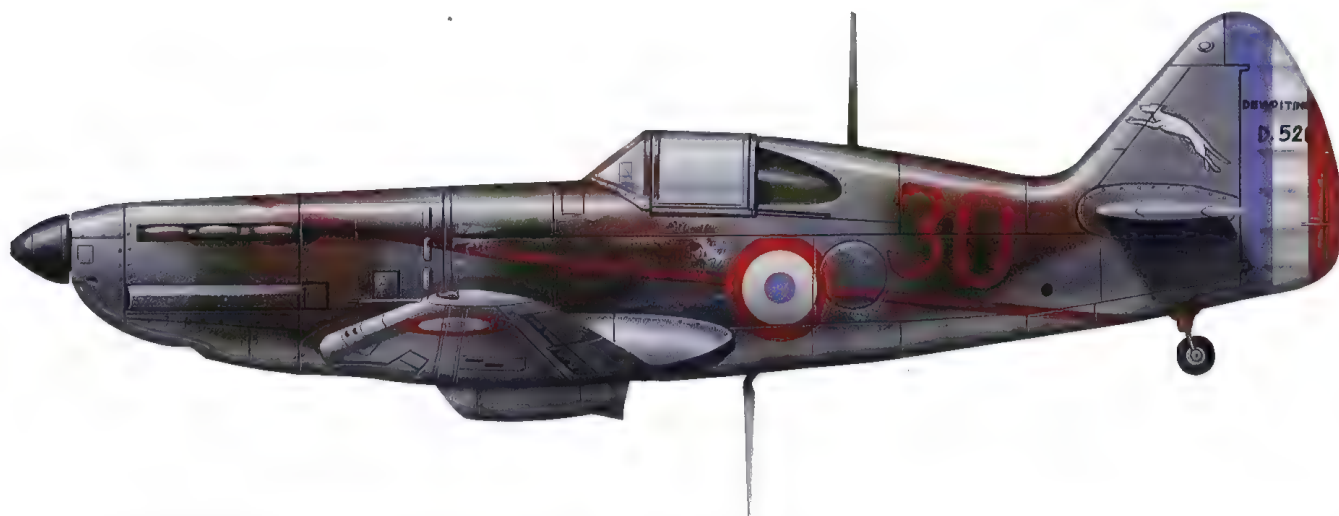
Morane Saulnier MS 406 of the 2^e escadrille of GC II/3 during the winter of 1939-40. The running greyhound insignia was inherited from the old SPA 81.



Curtiss H-75A-2 n° 193 of Lieutenant Max Vinçotte, commander of the second escadrille of GC 1/5 at Rabat, Morocco during the winter of 1942. This aircraft has received several modifications concerning its camouflage scheme. Indeed, it is seen here freshly repainted without the fuselage roundel and white stripe that French air force planes were supposed to have after the Armistice. On the other hand, the yellow and red stripes (often called "Vichy stripes" or "Slave livery") painted on French aircraft since June 1941 are still present. GC II/4 having been disbanded in August 1940, its former pilots were authorised to keep the insignia of their previous squadron in this group, which explains the presence of the "Petit Poucet" (Tom Thumb) of SPA 155 under the windshield, as well as the "Vulture" of SPA 75 at the rear of the fuselage.



Curtiss H-75A-3 n°280 of the 1^{re} escadrille of GC II/5 in 1945 at Agadir. The camouflage scheme is interesting with the light blue of the lower surfaces reaching very high up on the fuselage; the tail fin has the addition of the green stripe characteristic of the first escadrille of this group and a the Sioux Indian head inherited from SPA 124.



Dewoitine D.520 flown by Adjutant-Chef Bouton of GC II/3 in June 1940. This Groupe de Chasse (fighter-group) ended the French campaign with more than thirty confirmed kills and withdrew to North Africa after the Armistice. The "red ribbon" painted on the fuselage is specific to this unit.



Caudron C.714 du GC I/145 flown by Lieutenant J. Kowalski of GC I/145, Dreux, June 1940. Derived from a series of 1930s competition planes, this light fighter only saw service with one fighter group made up of Polish pilots, as shown by the Polish insignia painted on the fuselage hiding the original roundel

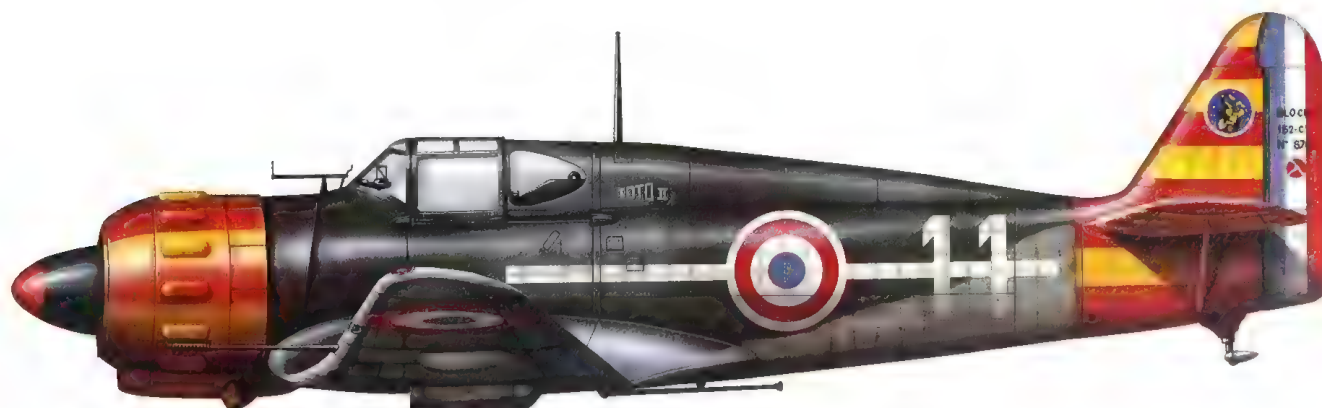


Bloch MB 152C1 "white 7" (serial number 134/code Y-621) 2^e escadrille, GC I/1 seen here in 1939. This group was mobilised with its old Dewoitine D.510, as the MB 152 was not, at the very beginning of the war, declared "apt for war service".

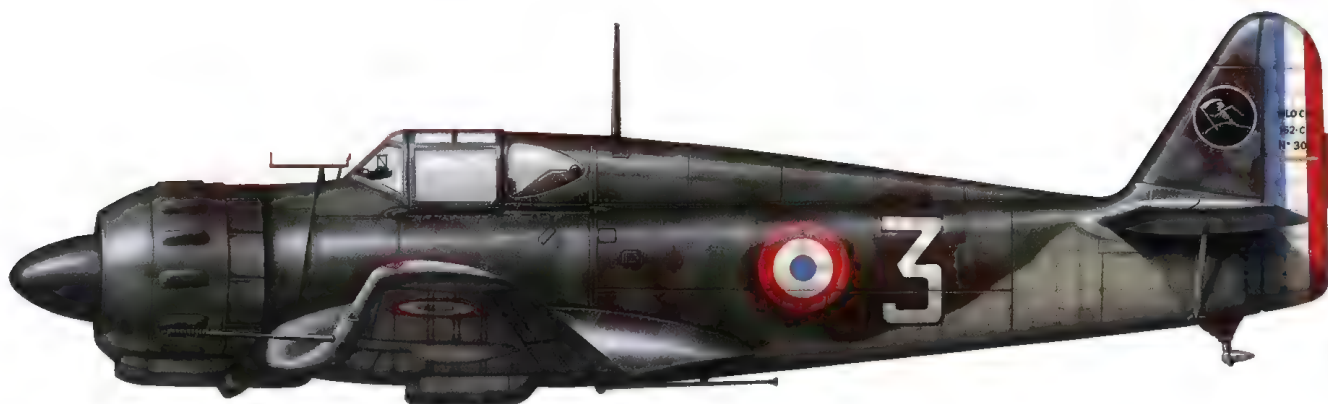
The aircraft bears the crowing cockerel of the Great War, and more precisely, of SPA 48. The motto "Chante et Combat" painted on some planes up to 1940 was curiously enough not used on the Bloch.



Bloch MB 152C1 n°231 (code Y-718) GC I/8, 1940. This plane was flown by Commandant Marc Ambrogi, a Great War ace. This aircraft's fuselage has received a tricolour stripe that often decorated the aircraft of aces during the Great War. The tail fin bears the flute-playing dwarf Dopey from the Snow White and the seven dwarves animated motion picture that was extremely popular in France at the time. The flute was the pilot's favourite instrument. Dopey has been coloured here as he is seen in the film, but other colours were perhaps used when he was painted on the aircraft. Note the large circumference of the fuselage roundel.



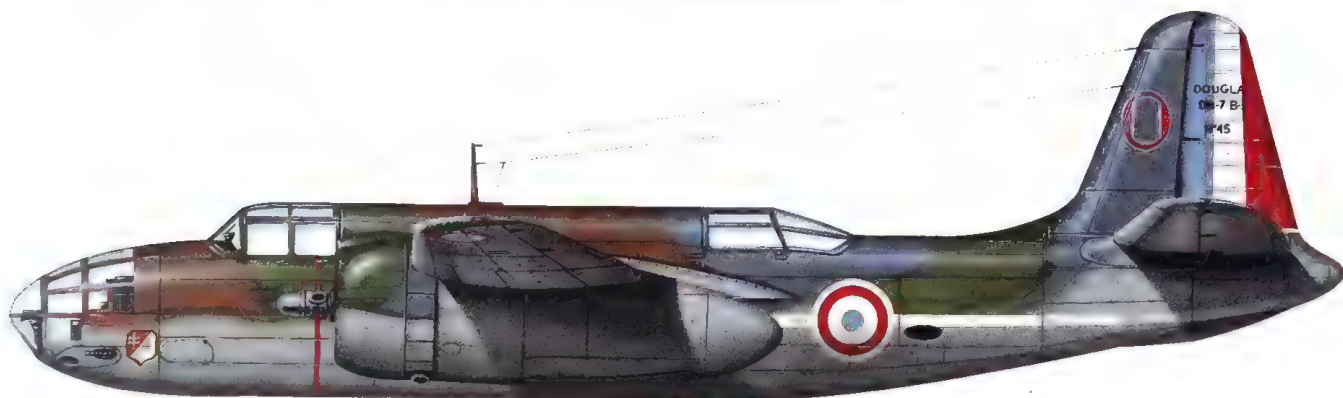
Bloch MB 152C1 n°672 of GC II/9, nicknamed "Toto II", flown by Sergent Lepage and seen here with its newly applied colours of the armée d'armistice. The aircraft has received its red and yellow stripes with the horizontal white stripe and the roundel outlined in the same colour. The tail fin has a playing card "Joker" a lucky symbol inherited from SPA 85, which began using this symbol on its aircraft in July 1918.



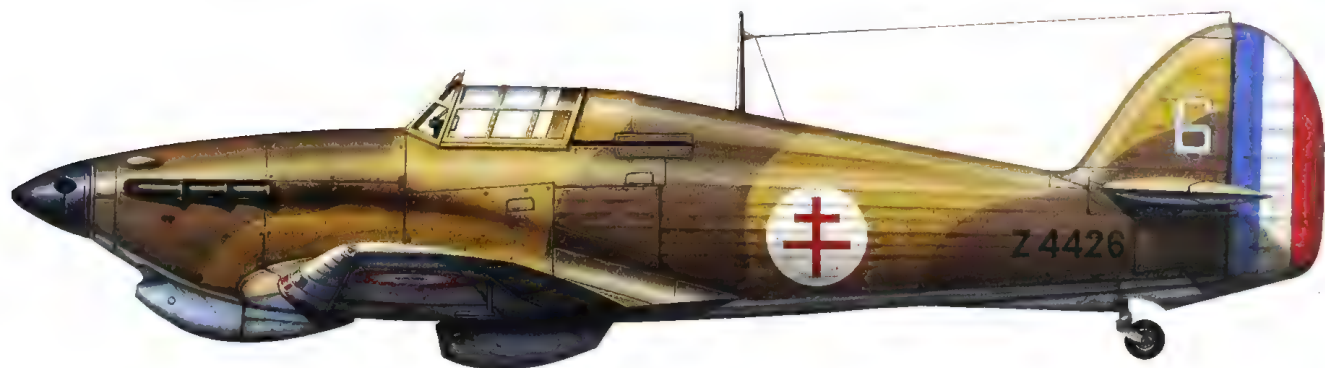
Bloch MB 152C1 "white 3" (n° 309/Y-796), 3^e escadrille of GC II/1, June 1940. The camouflage comprises of several patches, contrary to the usual larger swathes of colour. The tail fin has the famous "reaper" symbol that was adopted by SPA 94 at the beginning of 1918. This aircraft took part in the defence of Paris in June 1940 during the Luftwaffe's Operation Paula, the aim of which was to bring the French Air Force to its knees.



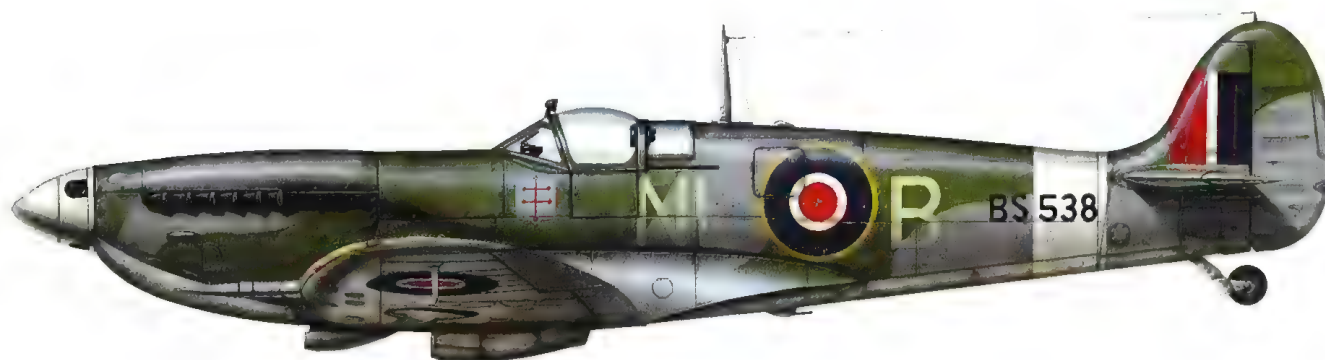
Potez 63.11. n°156 (serial C-655) of the 2^e escadrille, GR II/33 based at Athis-sous-Laon during the winter of 1939-1940. If we take into account all of its versions, the one seen here is the reconnaissance version with a mostly Perspex nose, it was the most common aircraft within the French Air Force in May 1940. More than one thousand of these aircraft, all versions put together, left the production lines.



Douglas DB-7 of GB 1/32, based at Casablanca in September 1940 and flown by the unit commander. The camouflage scheme is the regulation type for French aircraft. The individual number – "13" – has been replaced by a red "0", and the roundel enhanced by the white stripe that was imposed after the armistice for all French military aircraft. The first French DB-7 were powered by a Pratt & Whitney SC3G engine and were given a dorsal armament comprising of two 7.5 mm MAC machine-guns.



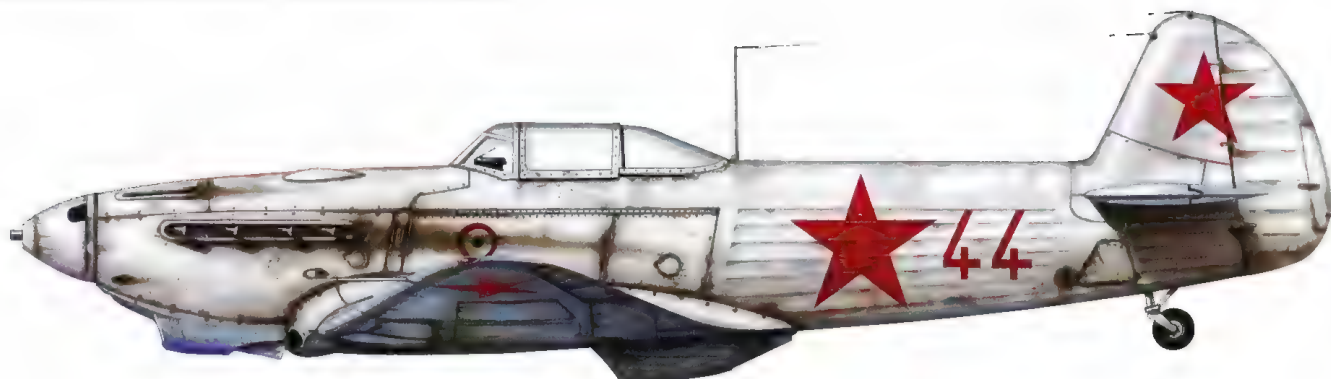
Hawker Hurricane Mk I du GC 1 (groupe de chasse 1). Fouka, spring 1942. It was on this Egyptian aerodrome that the "Alsace" received its first Hurricanes after having trained for three months with the British fighter. Although the aircraft kept their original "desert" camouflage of middle stone and dark earth on the upper surfaces and azure blue beneath, all the national markings are new with a flag on the rudder and a Cross of Lorraine replacing the usual fuselage roundel.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk IXC of No. 341 (French) Squadron. Biggin Hill (Great Britain), summer 1943. Initially given the code of GWK, this Spitfire, one of the first Mk. IX used by the FAFL, was flown by Pierre Clostermann during his stint with the "Alsace" group. The presence of the Cross of Lorraine, if it is plausible, has not, however, been confirmed beyond doubt. This marking was the only bending of the RAF rules in which the "Alsace" served until the end of the war.



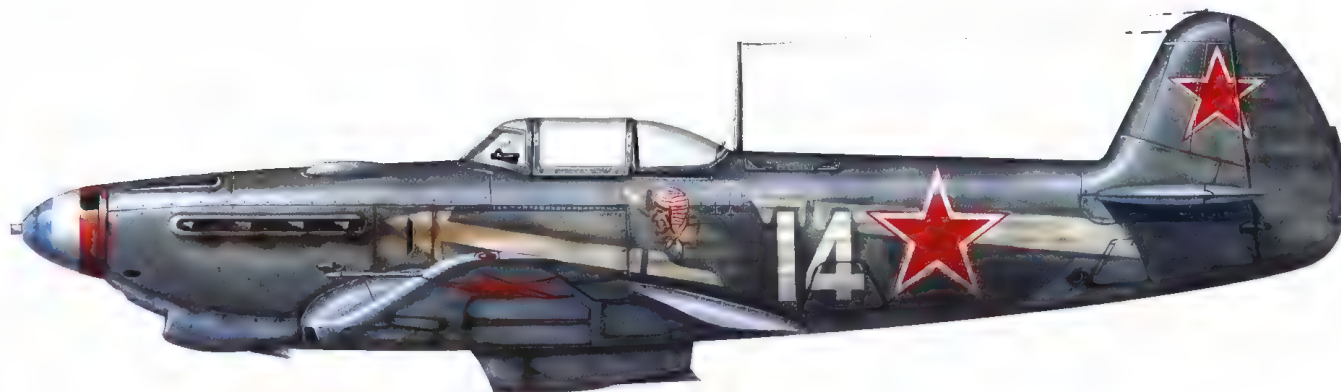
Douglas Boston IV (A-20K) of No.342 (French) Squadron (GB I/20 "Lorraine"), October 1944. The aircraft has the standard American camouflage scheme of Olive Drab upper surfaces with patches of Medium Green on the leading and trailing edges of the wings and tail fin, with the lower surfaces in Medium Gray. The group's insignia, the shield of the Lorraine province, is painted on the tail fin, whereas the famous cross decorates the nose. The "Lorraine" squadron began its career in the Middle East and was transferred to Great Britain in October 1942 in order to be incorporated into the RAF. It received this final version of the Boston in June 1944 and kept it until March 1945, the date on which it received the B-25 Mitchell.



Yakovlev Yak-1b n°44. On 22 March 1943, the first French volunteers of the Normandie groupe (the group became a regiment in February 1944) arrived at Iotniani Zavod (U.S.S.R.), a locality situated twenty kilometres north of Kalouga. At this time, their Yaks were completely covered in their winter camouflage of white for the upper surfaces with light blue remaining underneath and revealed themselves to be decorated with a small roundel, the distinctive marking of aircraft piloted by Frenchmen. The aircraft here is that of Marcel Albert, one of the rare pilots to go through the whole campaign, returning to France safe and sound with a total of 23 kills.



Yakovlev Yak-1b n°11. When spring returned, the Yak lost their winter livery and returned to the initial camouflage used before 1944 of light blue for the aircraft's lower surfaces and dark green and black for the upper surfaces; the stars are bordered in black (note that some illustrations show them with a white border) and are not present on the upper wings surfaces. The aircraft shown here was one used by Albert Durand and is decorated with a shark mouth, this being something of a rarity. Only a few other aircraft had this decoration, painted in a more or less stylised fashion. Sous-Lieutenant Durand went missing in action on 1 September 1943.



Yakovlev Yak-9 n°14. The "Père Magloire" portrayed here was one of the aircraft flown by Sous-Lieutenant Marcel Lefèvre of the "Normandie" group at Sloboda at the end of October 1943. The cartoon is accompanied by the markings of eleven confirmed kills, four of which were shared, with three other probable kills coming later, but which were also shared. A talented pilot, Lieutenant Lefèvre did not accept the idea of an armistice and crossed over the demarcation line to join the ranks of the French forces in Algeria, before making an adventure filled flight to the U.S.S.R. He died of burns after crashing his plane due to engine problems.



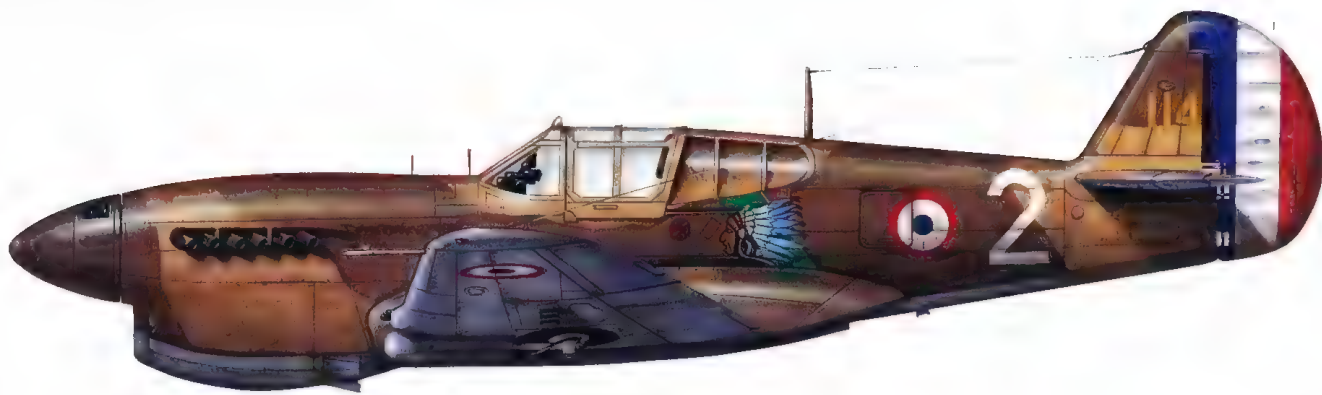
Yakovlev Yak-3 n°5. On 31 July 1944, Stalin awarded the regiment with the title of "Niemen" as the French contribution to the fighting had allowed the Soviets to cross this river that stretches from the Baltic to Byelorussia. The aircraft portrayed here was that of Roger Sauvage in East Prussia, at Friedland to be exact, at the beginning of 1945. This ace's planes have been illustrated a great many times and one version in particular, has been portrayed with a thick red stripe coiling around the arrow, of which we are dubious unless, of course, photographs are found confirming this interpretation....Fourteen kills portrayed by "Balkenkreuz" decorate the fuselage.



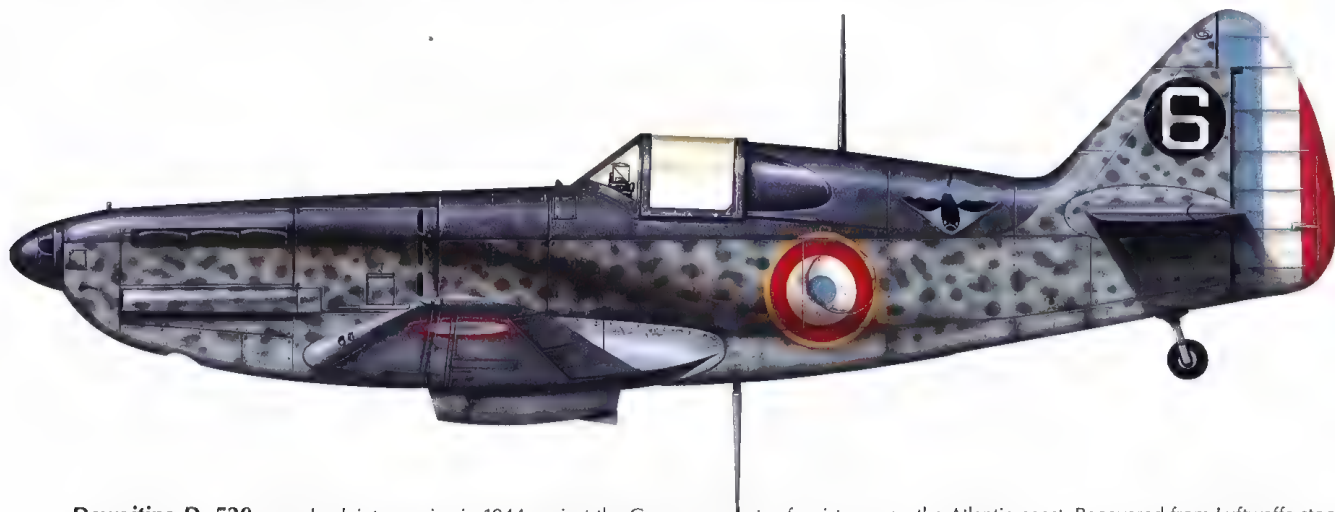
Yakovlev Yak-3 n°12. This Yak has been brutally "stripped" of its usual markings, arrows (bolts of lightning for some) and stars, only retaining its tricolour propeller spinner and its number. With the photographs it is impossible to determine if the wings already have roundels. In any case the rudder has been given a hastily applied tricolour flag, the blue of which seems to be particularly dark. A small extravagance is the eye painted on the aircraft's nose. Apparently, this tired old veteran did not have the honour of landing at Le Bourget due to mechanical problems keeping it at Saint-Dizier, one of its last stops before the glorious return to Paris.



Yakovlev Yak-3 "Double Zero". Before leaving the U.S.S.R., the Regiment was given 42 Yak-3 aircraft by Stalin. The aircraft portrayed here was that of Louis Delphino, the commander of the Regiment from 12 December 1944 to 20 June 1945 and who achieved 20 kills during this campaign, 15 of which were sure. The illustration here corresponds to the livery that the plane had when it arrived at Le Bourget on 20 June 1945, with the arrow and double-zero and Soviet star on the fuselage. Louis Delphino later held the positions of chief of the general staff and commander of air defence then, with the rank of general d'armée Aérienne, died suddenly in 1968.



Curtiss P-40 Warhawk of the 3^e escadrille of GC II/5, Algiers, at the beginning of 1943. In most part thanks to its glorious past, the "Lafayette" was equipped with the P-40 at the end of 1942, following the allied landings in North Africa. These planes, of American origin had, however, the British desert camouflage (sand, brown and light blue for the lower surfaces) and were given the markings of their new owners, roundel (smaller in size and without the yellow border), unit insignia with a smaller size green stripe and a tricolour fin flash partially hiding the serial number on the rudder. Contrary to what some sources state, we have painted the propeller spinner in the same colour as the camouflage as seen in period photographs. The red colour typical of the Mediterranean theatre of operations was perhaps used later.



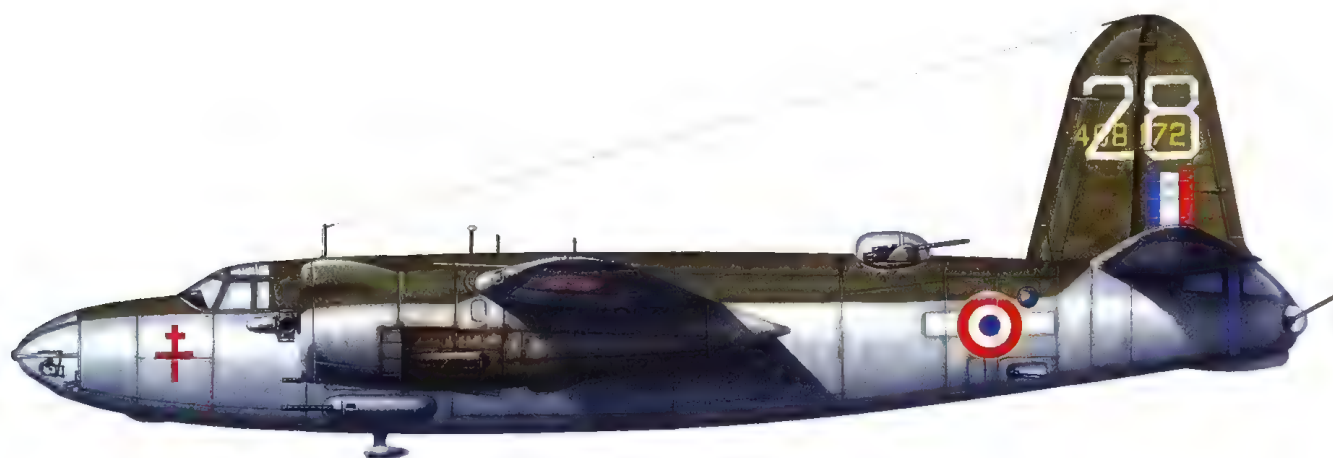
Dewoitine D. 520 came back into service in 1944 against the German pockets of resistance on the Atlantic coast. Recovered from Luftwaffe stocks where they were used for advanced training, these aircraft, of which we have here N°6 (production number 689) of GC II/18 "Saintonge" with the newt insignia on a sky blue diamond, kept their German camouflage (belly in RLM 76, sides and upper wings surfaces in RLM 74/75), but with mottles, also covering the wings, perhaps in green and dark brown using recovered stocks of paint. The "Saintonge" undertook sixty missions with the D. 520 beginning in December 1944, before receiving the Spitfire Mk. V in February 1945.



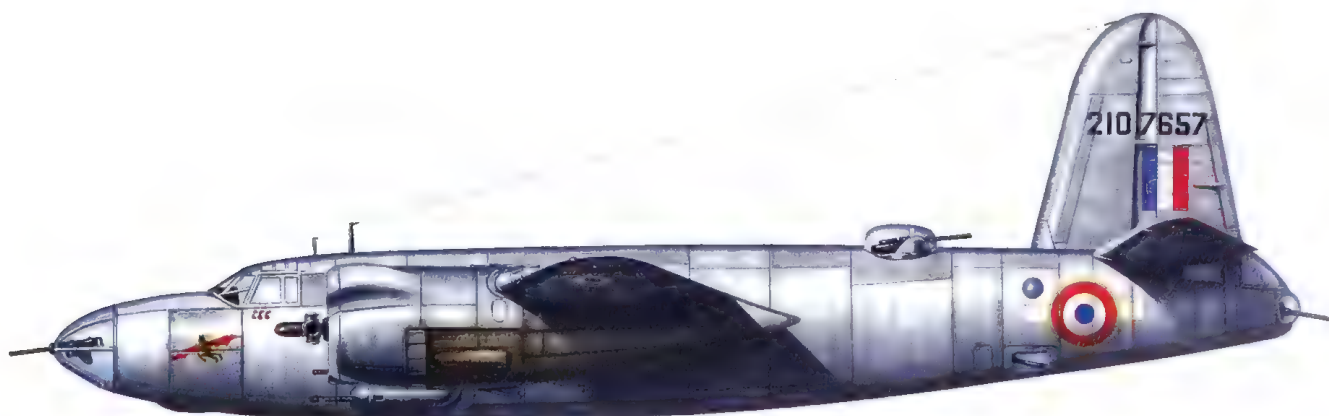
Junkers Ju 88A-4 captured from the Germans and belonging to the Dor group. One should be careful concerning the colours of this aircraft. It would appear that the upper surfaces do not follow the usual camouflage scheme, but comprise of grey (RLM 66 and RLM 75). On some, the demarcation between the lower colour of RLM 76 and the sides is clearly defined which leads us to suppose that the latter were painted in a slightly darker colour; some sources also put forward the use of a greenish-grey. This difference could also be explained by the slight halo created around the mottling when these were painted on; these being of the two colours of the upper surfaces.



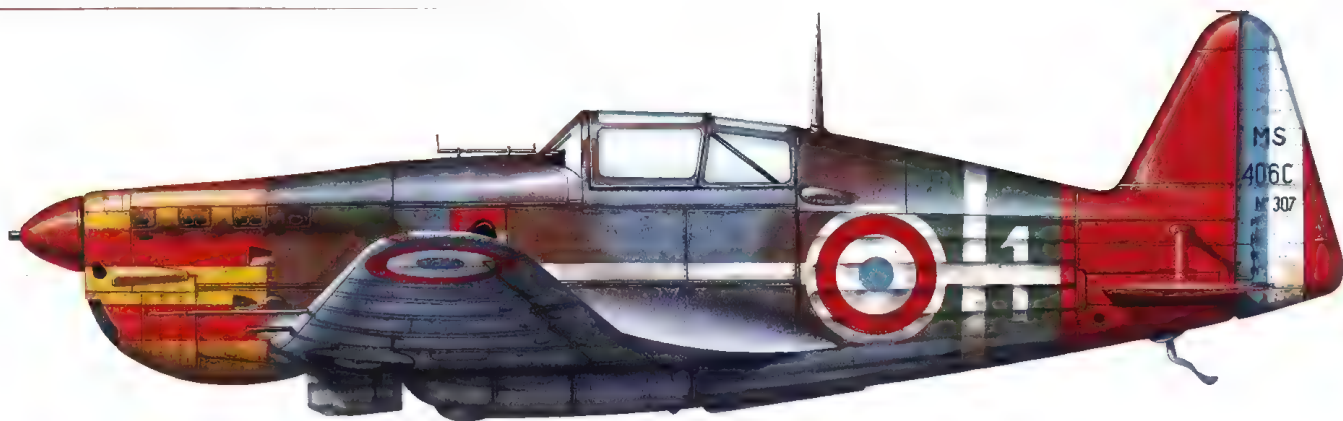
Breguet 693 n°65 of the 2^e escadrille of GBA 1/51. This elegant twin-engine aircraft, originally designed as a ground attack aircraft, was intended to carry out low level flights....with engines that only achieved full power at 3,000 metres! It also suffered terribly from the effects of the German flak which rapidly forced the command use it in a semi-dive bomb role, without any air cover with all the consequences that we can imagine.



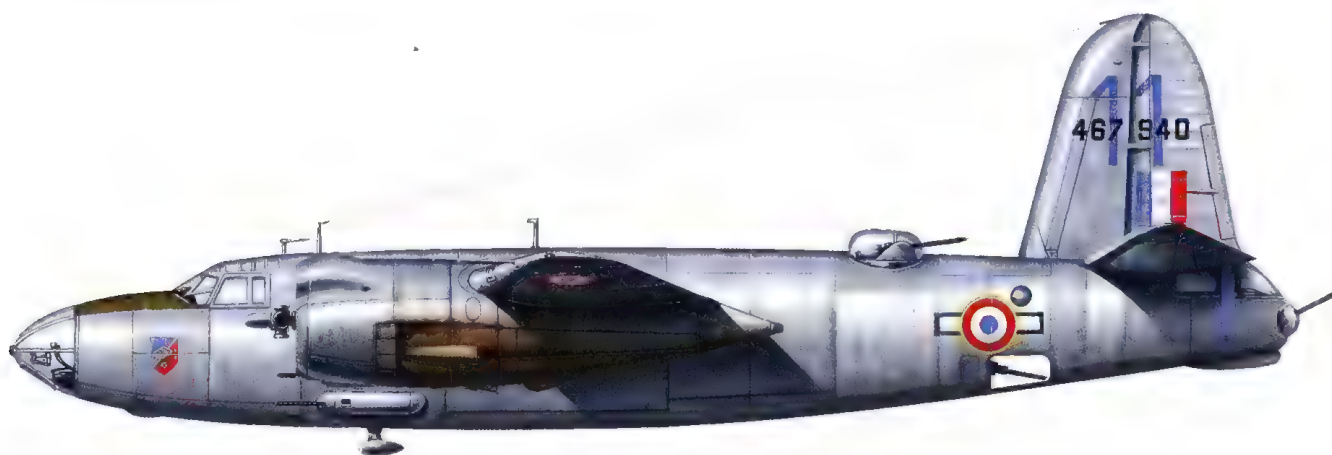
Martin B-26G-25-MA Marauder (s/n 44-68172) of GBM 2/20 "Bretagne". Only the upper surfaces of the fuselage and the wings are painted in olive drab and although the white side bars of the American roundel have been kept, their blue edges have been painted over. The blue of the roundels and fin flash is brighter as it was no doubt applied with American paints. Note the white 28 partially covering the American serial number. The Cross of Lorraine is red here, whereas other sources state that it was blue; we, however, have opted for the first eventuality, but this, of course, cannot be guaranteed.



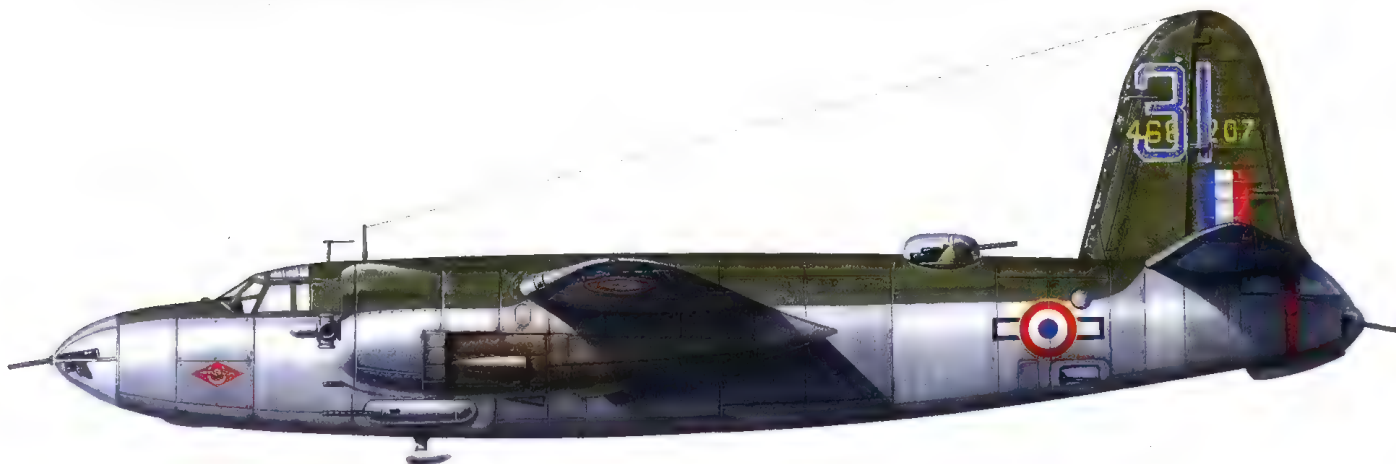
Martin B-26C-45-MO Marauder (s/n 42-107657) of GBM 1/22 "Maroc". This aircraft remains in bare metal which was not always the case in this group that was also equipped with Marauders whose upper surfaces were painted in olive drab. The unit insignia of a winged devil throwing a flaming grenade (SAL 105) is accompanied by three mission markings also portrayed by flaming grenades painted under windshield's side window. The vertical blue stripe, usually painted at the rear of the fuselage, is absent here.



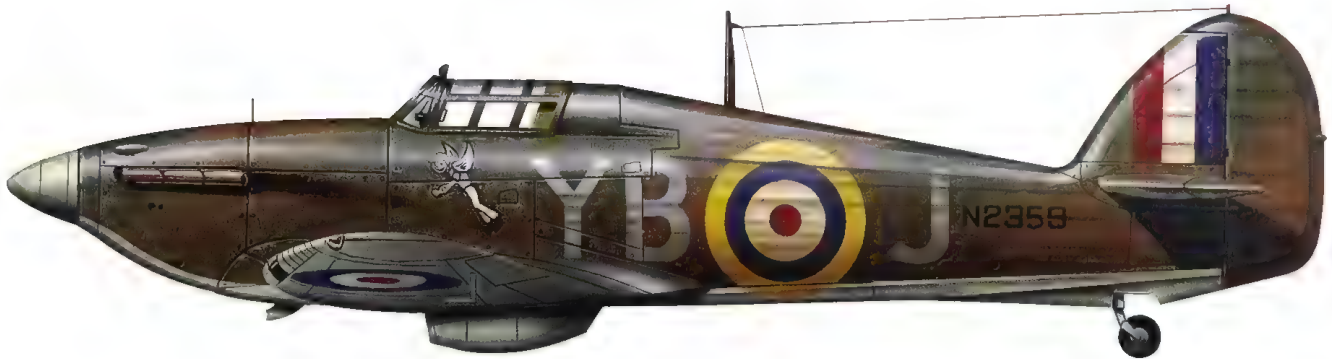
Morane Saulnier MS 406 n°307 flown by Capitaine Pierre Pouyade, commander of EC 2/295 based at Tong (Tonkin) in 1942. The aircraft bears the specific markings of the Armistice air force, imposed by the Japanese occupier in order to avoid any confusion with American aircraft. Depending on often disputable, the propeller spinner was painted red or black. Pierre Pouyade later took command of the "Normandie" group from July 1943 to December 1944.



Martin B-26G-15-MA Marauder (s/n 44-67940) of GBM 2/52 "Franche-Comté" entirely in bare metal, seen here in Italy in 1944. The vertical stripe painted at the rear of the fuselage near the turret is blue, a colour used for the tactical number 11 on the tail. The original dark blue borders of the side bars of the American roundel have been retained and the blue of the roundels and fin flash are, as usual, darker than the "official" French blue. Note the absence of armament in the aircraft's nose.



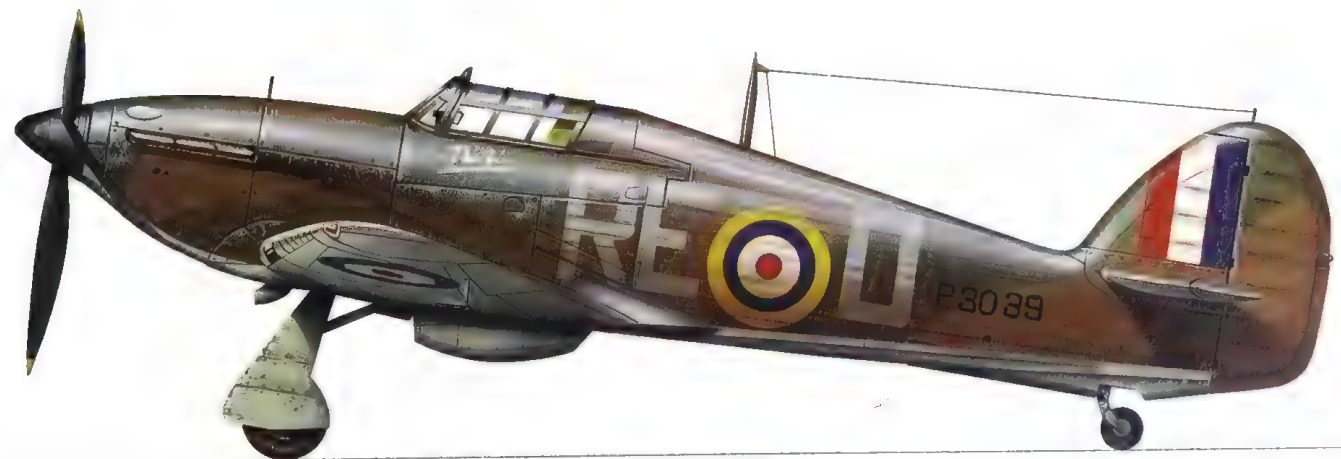
Martin B-26G-25-MA Marauder (s/n 44-68207) of GBM 2/63 "Senegal", seen at Mengen in 1945. Only the upper surfaces of the aircraft are camouflaged, the lower two thirds are left bare. The white bordered code number partially hides the American serial number. Here again, the original side bars of the American roundel have been retained with the tricolour roundel, whilst the rear of the fuselage has a vertical red stripe, the reconnaissance marking of this unit.



Hawker Hurricane Mk I of No. 17 Squadron based at Debden in 1940. The personal insignia, such as the winged Popeye seen here, was a rarity with British fighters during the Battle of Britain as one pilot rarely used the same aircraft over a long period.



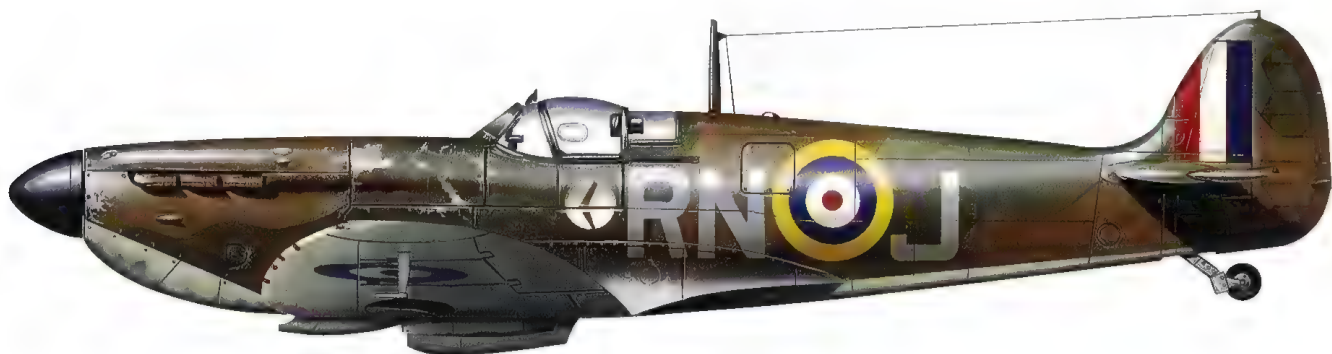
Hawker Hurricane Mk I of No. 242 Squadron based at Coltishall in the autumn of 1940. Its pilot, Squadron Leader Douglas Bader, lost both legs in a flying accident in 1931. He rejoined the RAF in 1940. His unit was thrown into the battle on 30 August the same year. On his first sortie, his group obtained eleven kills, two of which were achieved by Bader.



Hawker Hurricane Mk I of No. 229 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by the Belgian pilot Vicky Ortmans during the Battle of Britain. The only extravagance is the discreetly painted nickname of "Bibi" under the cockpit canopy.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk I flown by Flight Lieutenant Adolf "Sailor" Malan of No. 74 Squadron, Hornchurch, June 1940. Born in South-Africa, Malan began his career in the Merchant Navy before becoming a pilot, hence his nickname. Note the black painted lower surfaces without roundels.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk I flown by Flight Lieutenant Desmond Sheen of No. 72 Squadron and seen at Acklington in August 1940. The personal insignia below the cockpit canopy represents a boomerang, a reminder of this pilot's Australian origins.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk II flown by Squadron Leader Donald Findlay when he was in command of No. 41 Squadron and seen here at Hornchurch in November 1940. The inscription "Observer Corps", as well as the insignia, show that this aircraft was a gift of the ROC (Royal Observer Corps). Note the tally of two kills represented by swastikas painted under the cockpit canopy.



Hawker Hurricane Mk IIC "Night Duty" of No. 87 Squadron at Tangmere, flown by Pilot Officer Frank Mitchell. The Hurricane's of No. 87 Sqn carried out strafing missions on German positions on the D-Day beaches.



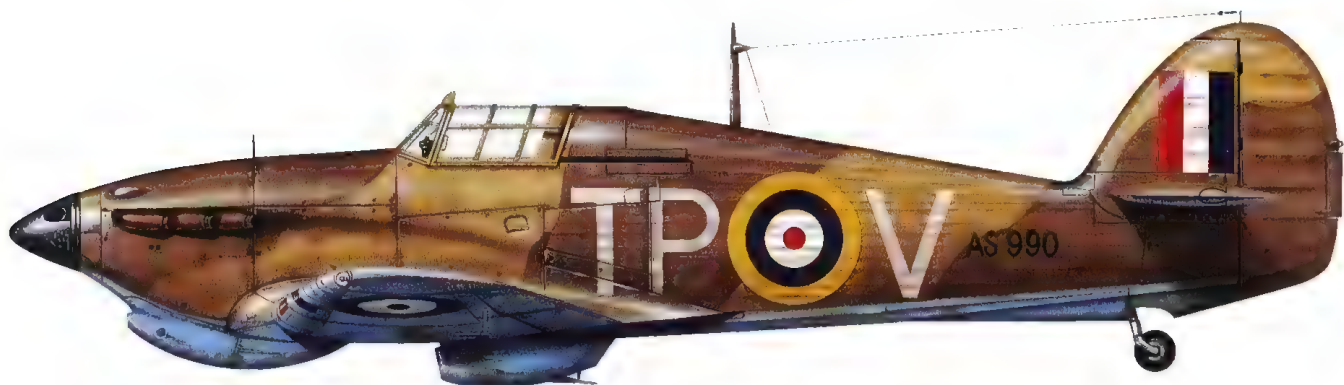
Armstrong Whitworth Whitley Mk V of No. 138 Squadron seen at the end of 1942. This poor performance bomber is a good example of the laborious beginnings of Bomber Command who withdrew it from operations, relegating it training missions, towing and in-flight testing of special equipment. Coastal Command also used it to hunt U-Boats. This aircraft could carry up to 3,715 kg of bombs. Its defensive armament comprised of five 7.65 mm machine-guns.



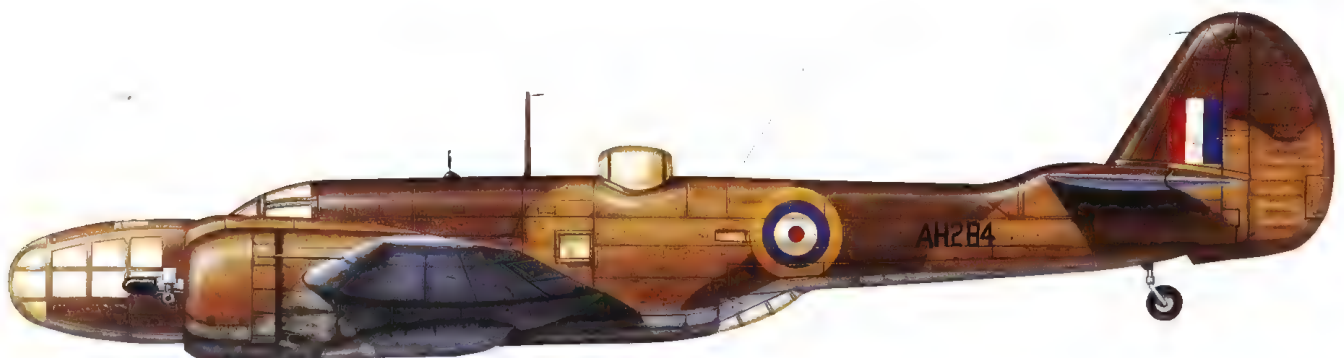
Avro Manchester Mk IA of No. 207 Squadron based at Waddington in March 1942. Before being used in the "1,000 bomber raid", the Manchesters of No. 207 Squadron were the first to drop the giant 1,813 kg "Cookie" bombs on Cologne. These aircraft encountered many problems with their in line Vulture engines and were removed from their units in 1942.



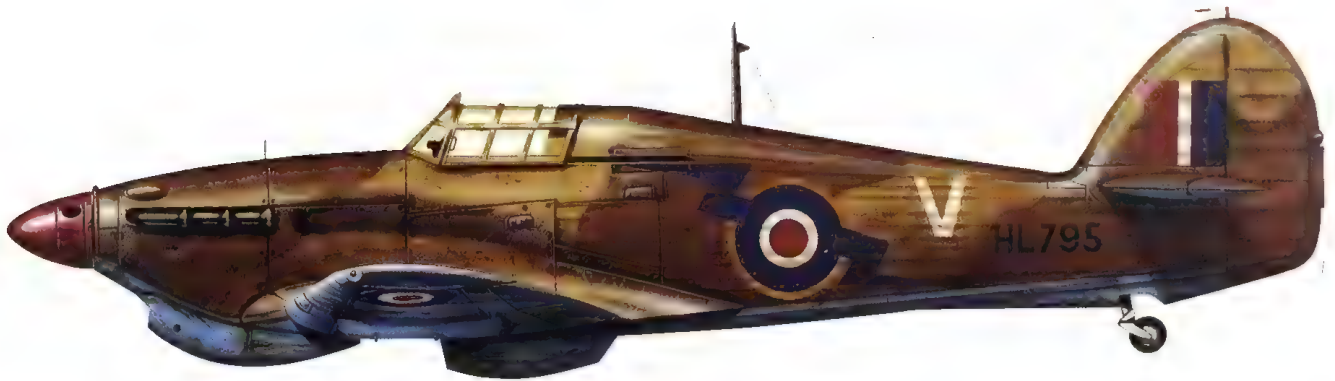
Curtiss P-40B Tomahawk named "Man", of No. 112 Squadron at Sidi Haneish, Egypt, in the autumn of 1941. This unit was the first to receive this type of aircraft in June the same year.



Hawker Hurricane Mk II of No. 73 Squadron flown by Pilot Officer James Denis. It was with this aircraft that J. Denis, a French ace with seven kills, added another by shooting down the Bf 109E of Marseille. Despite a bullet riddled cockpit, he survived this encounter unscathed and made a belly landing.



Martin Maryland Mk II of the Desert Air Force in 1942, camouflaged like most of the British aircraft of the time in this theatre of operations in dark earth/middle stone/azure blue.



Hawker Hurricane Mk IIB of No. 274 Sqn. in 1942 at El Alamein. The blue lightning on the roundel is one of the characteristics (unofficially introduced) of this unit specialised in attacking land and maritime convoys.



Curtiss Kittyhawk Mk I. The aircraft portrayed here is a Kittyhawk Mk. 1 of RAAF No. 450 Squadron in 1942. These aircraft had a better performance than the Hurricane, but nevertheless paid a heavy price in their encounters with the Bf 109 "Trop". As a matter of interest, Marseille shot down 79 of these planes, both the model C and E!



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VC "Trop", with a special filter for African and Mediterranean theatres under the nose. This aircraft of No. 417 Sqn. operated from Egypt, then Tunisia, in 1942-1943.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VB (EP606/Xlo P) of No 229 Squadron, RCAF, seen here in April 1943 and flown by Ryan Gosling. Some sources indicate that this aircraft finished its career with the French Air Force. The bad quality photographs show a very tired looking plane painted in a random fashion. It appears that it is the areas originally painted in Middle Stone that mostly received a coat of Dark Sea Grey. Opinions differ as to the colours used with the new camouflage on planes operating out of Malta. According to various sources, Dark Sea Grey and Extra Dark Sea Grey were used, but also an Azure Blue wash, or even paint made for battle ships, easily available in Gibraltar where the aircraft were painted before being dispatched. To make things even more complicated, planes that were repainted later would have been given a combination of Slate Grey and Dark Green. The paints adopted would, above all, have been those easily available on site....



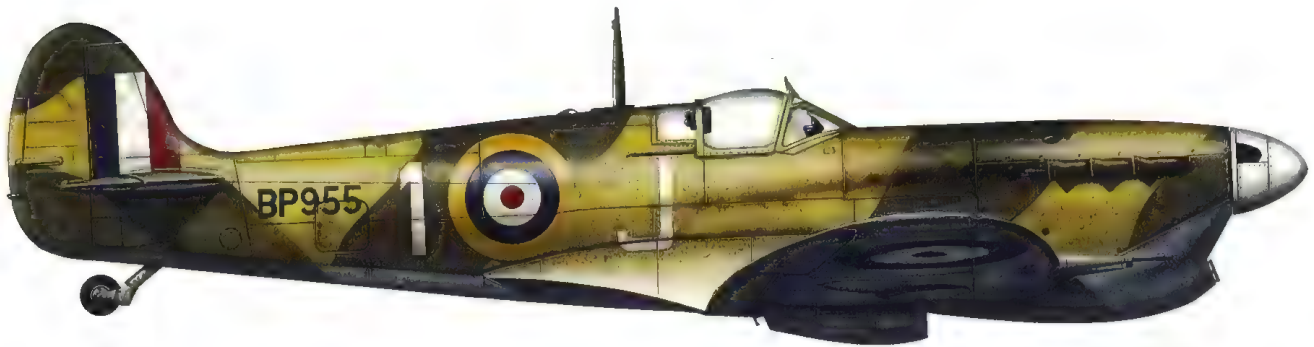
Supermarine Spitfire Mk VC (BR344/Mlo 3) of No 601 Squadron, RAF, seen here on the *USS Wasp* aircraft carrier in 1942. The aircraft appears to have landed on Malta in its ETO livery, comprising of Dark Earth, Dark Green and Sky. Note the words "Guns Loaded" near the windshield frame. This plane was flown by Stan Howard, a Rhodesian pilot who was later killed during a crash landing.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VC (BR323/Slo 3) of No 229 Squadron, RAF, June 1942. This was one of the many planes flown by the ace, George "Screwball" Beurling. At the end of the war, Beurling had a tally of 31 kills, 27 of which were obtained at Malta with No 229 Squadron. The "tropical" camouflage has received numerous touches of colour mostly applied to the surfaces initially painted in Middle Stone. The choice of bluish tones used here to portray the new camouflage is totally subjective.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VB (EP829/Tlo N) of No 249 Squadron, RCAF and flown by John J. Lynch, with which he obtained his fifth kill. Lynch also obtained the Allies' "one thousandth Malta kill", by shooting down a Ju 52 on 28 April 1943. Note the propeller cone left in red (a marking usually reserved for Desert Air Force fighters), as well as the seven Balkenkreuz kill markings painted near the windshield. This pilot ended the war with a tally of ten kills and, with historical irony, his "Maltese" Mk VB was given to the Aeronautica Militare Italiana a year after the end of the war. This pilot's career ended tragically in 1956 following a fatal accident with a USAF F-84G.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VC (BP955/Jlo 1) belonging to No 601 Squadron, RAF, Luqa, 1942. Its pilot, Denis Barnham, scored five kills during his Maltese adventures. The aircraft was delivered by USS Wasp and does not appear to have been repainted during its time in the Mediterranean. Although the upper surfaces are painted in the standard Dark Earth and Middle Stone, it is difficult to know if the underneath was in Azure Blue or the rarer Sky Blue, a colour that is similar to the German RLM 76.



Spitfire Mk VC (BR190/Alo 2) of No 249, RAAF, seen here during the April-May period, 1942 at Takali. It was whilst flying this aircraft that its pilot, Paul Brennan, scored his sixth kill over Malta. The aircraft appears to have received a randomly applied grey-dark blue wash, covering practically all of the surfaces, but avoiding, as was often the case, the roundels and code number.



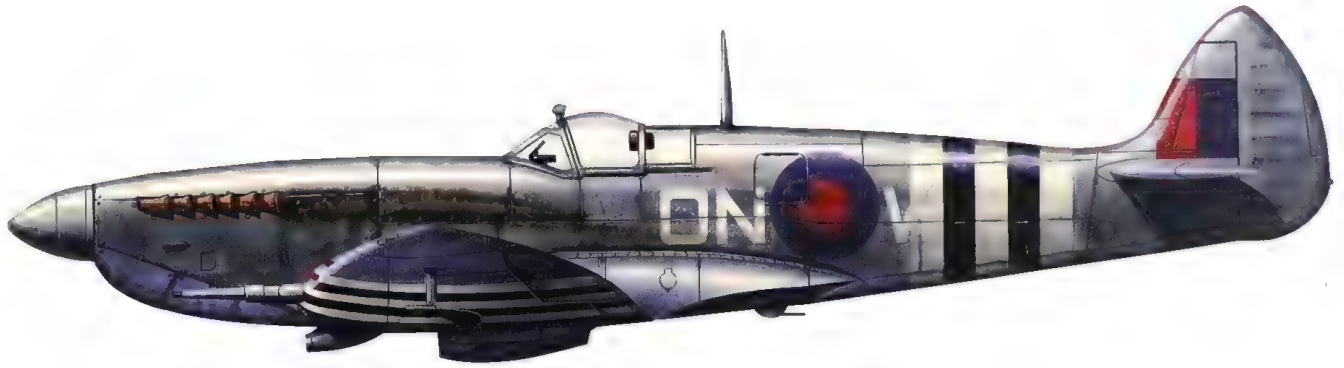
Westland Whirlwind Mk I of RAF No. 263 Squadron during the failed landings at Dieppe in August 1942. The camouflage comprises of dark green/ocean grey/medium sea grey. The nose is painted white, as are the wings with two large stripes of the same colour on a black background in order to avoid any confusion with German planes.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VB of 350 Belgian Squadron of the RAF. This aircraft was flown by Pilot Officer H.E. Marechal who made a belly landing with it following a dog fight near Dieppe on 19 August 1942.



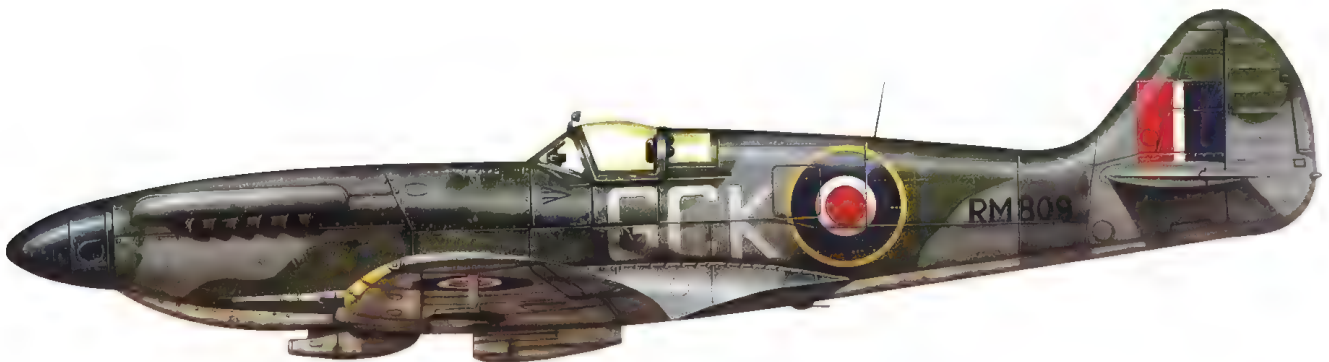
Supermarine Seafire Mk IIC of No. 808 Squadron on HMS Battler, June 1943, flown by Flight Commander Lt. P. Constable. This version was taken from the Mk. Vc that was recognisable from the outside by its three exhaust pipes and the three bladed Rotol propeller. Note the unusual arrestor hook.



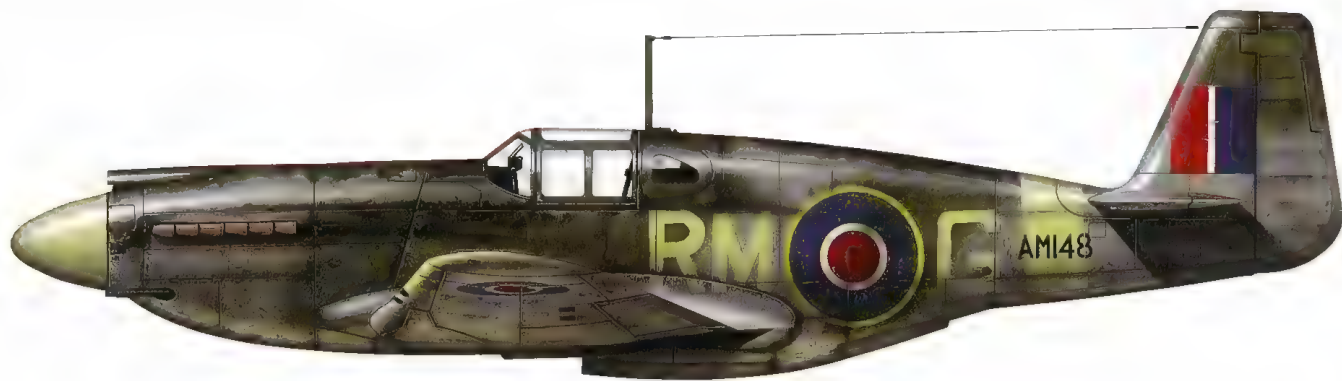
Supermarine Spitfire Mk VII flown by Flying Officer Walter Hibbert of No. 124 Squadron, Bradwell Bay, June 1944. Less famous than their Mk. IX fighter counterparts, the reconnaissance Spitfires played an important role for the RAF before, as well as after D-Day.



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB, SF^{ON} (serial number **MN 627**), RAF 137 Squadron. Remains of the invasion stripes are visible under the belly. This unit was still stationed in France at the end of June 1944 with 263 Squadron, whereas all the other Typhoon squadrons had been sent to France. It was the only unit engaged against the V-1 flying bombs, shooting down thirty. During the month of August 1944, it rejoined the 2nd TAF in France.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk XIV flown by Wing Commander George Clinton Keefer of the RAF 125th Wing at Eindhoven, Holland in the spring of 1945. The camouflage scheme is standard, but the stripe indicating that it belongs to Fighter Command has been covered over as stipulated by the regulations of the time.



North American Mustang I, of RAF No. 26 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by Squadron Leader Michael Goodale for tactical reconnaissance over Dieppe. All of the Mustang squadrons (No. 26, 239, 400 and 414) were based at Gatwick south-east of Biggin Hill.



Douglas Havoc Mk I Intruder, of RAF No. 23 Squadron seen at Wittering (Great Britain) at the beginning of 1941. This "night fighter" has naturally been painted black. These aircraft, previously known as the Boston Mk II, had their glass bomber's nose replaced with a solid model that was better suited to their new role and equipped with an A.I. Mark IV radar. Apparently, the aircraft portrayed here has not yet been equipped with night fighter exhausts and has a rather atypical model. No. 23 Squadron was previously equipped with Blenheims and started to replace its Bostons with Mosquitos in July 1942 with which it finished the war.



North American Mustang Mk III flown by Stanislaw Skalski, the commander of No. 133 Wing (No. 84 Group, 2nd TAF) whose initials have the replaced the regulation fuselage letters. The aircraft has all of its invasion stripes as well as the markings of 21 kills under the cockpit.



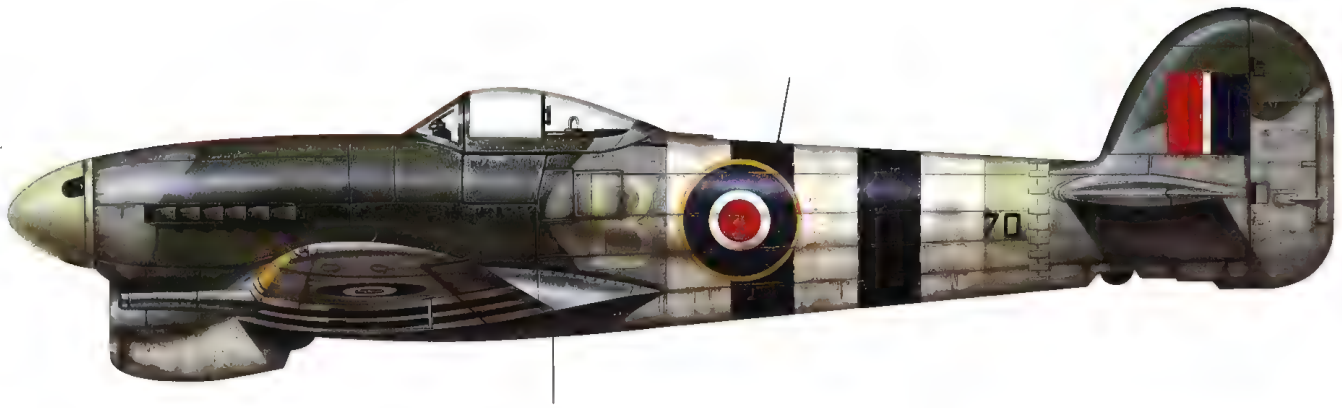
Supermarine Spitfire Mk XIV of RAF 610 Squadron at West Malling in England. This unit was the first to receive this more powerful version equipped with a Griffon engine in January 1944. Squadron Leader R.A. Newbury shot down seven V-1 flying bombs over Kent with this aircraft in the summer of 1944. His final tally was nine flying bombs and four planes.



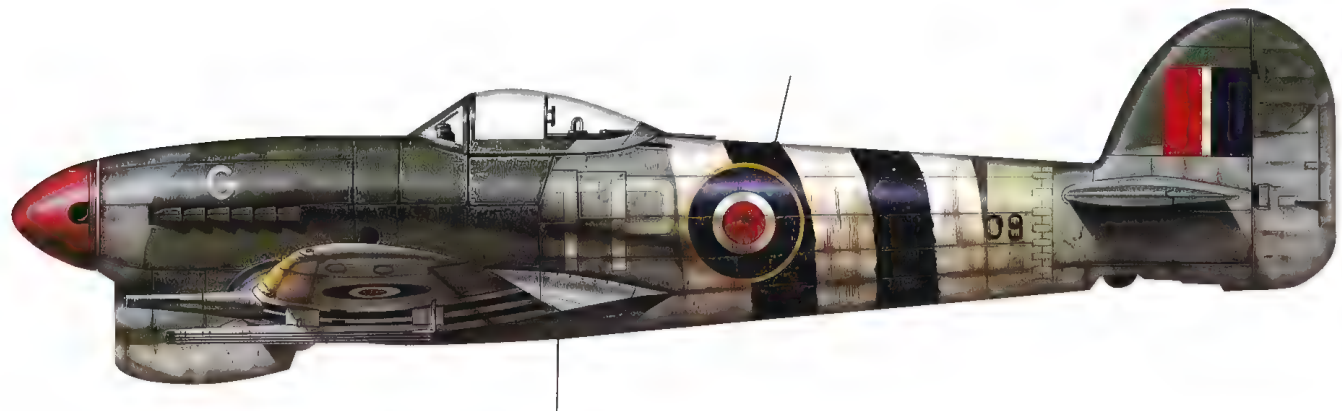
North American Mustang III of the Polish 315 Squadron, RAF, based at Peterhead in Scotland, November 1944. The white cowl stripe was specific to the Mustang III of the RAF. This aircraft's tally of kills includes seven V-1 flying bombs.



De Havilland Mosquito FB Mk VI of No. 464 Squadron, RAAF (Royal Australian Air Force) attached to No. 140 Wing (2nd TAF), February 1944. It took part in the famous raid against the prison at Amiens on 18 February 1944 and was lost during a mission near Servile, France in January 1945.



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB flown by Wing Commander R.E. Brooker, the commander of No. 123 Wing (comprising No. 164, 183, 198 and 609 Squadrons), stationed at Thorney Island during the month of June 1944. Note that the invasion stripes partially hide its serial number.



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB of No. 198 Squadron also based at Thorney Island in Great Britain during the month of June 1944. The aircraft is equipped with a four-bladed propeller and a new all vision canopy. It has the standard British camouflage scheme of ocean grey/dark green/medium sea grey, plus hastily and roughly applied invasion stripes. The letter G has been hidden by the fuselage markings and is no doubt also painted on the other side of the engine cowlings



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB of No. 181 Squadron, June 1944. The Typhoon is the emblematic ground attack aircraft for the British. It was an excellent weapons platform and carried a formidable armament of cannon and rockets. It literally terrorised the Germans by systematically destroying everything that moved (including trains) before and after D-Day.



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB of the Canadian No. 439 Squadron attached to No. 143 Wing (2nd TAF), August 1944 at St. André, France. The invasion stripes have been removed from the upper wing surfaces and only appear on the lower surfaces. Note the individual letter H painted in front of the exhaust pipes.



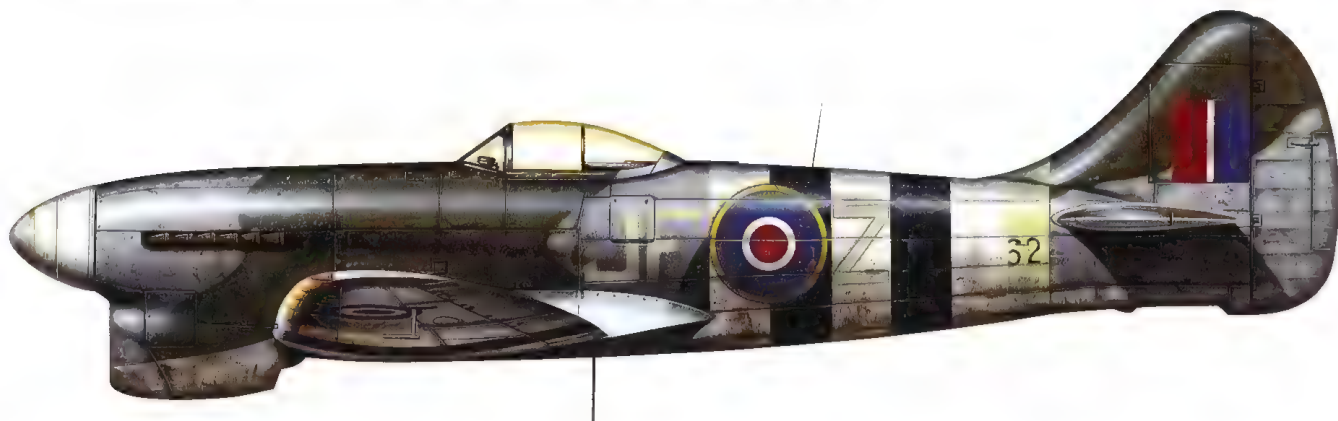
Hawker Typhoon Mk IB of No. 175 Squadron, a unit that was equipped with this aircraft from April 1943 to September 1945. It was notably seen at Fresne-Camilly during the months of July-August 1944. The invasion stripes have been carefully applied and are positioned on the aircraft's lower surfaces; its fuselage code is all present.



Hawker Typhoon Mk IB, based at Schleswig in Germany during the summer of 1945. Just after the cessation of hostilities, the British aircraft lost their legendary sobriety and at last received a few coloured markings, such as the red of the propeller spinner and the Sky fuselage stripe.



Supermarine Spitfire FR Mk XIV of No. 39 Wing (comprising of No.16, 69 and 140 Squadrons) at Eindhoven, Holland, January 1945, this being at the time of the German attack on allied airfields. The aircraft seen here was flown by Wing Commander R.C. Wadell and could also undertake reconnaissance missions thanks to its camera, the circular window of which can be seen on the roundel.



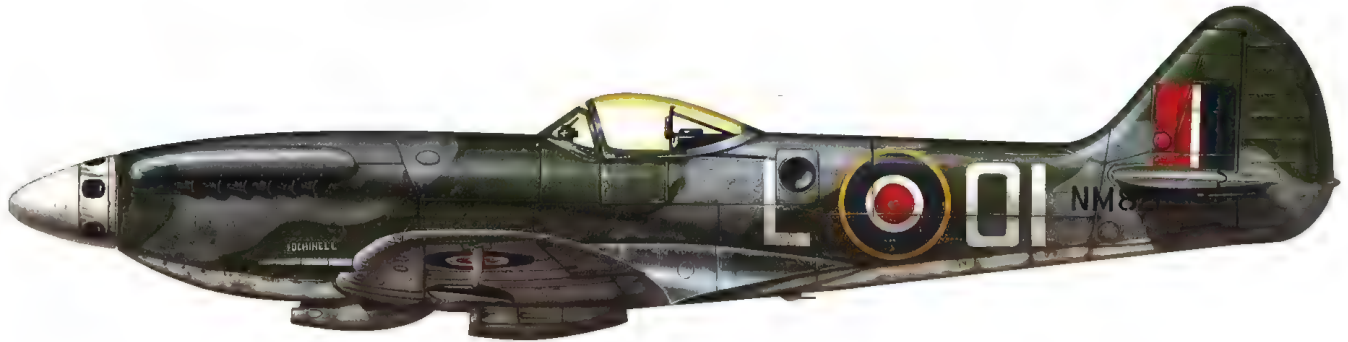
Hawker Tempest Mk V JF°Z (serial number JN 862) of No 3 Squadron, RAF, flown by Flight Lieutenant Van Lierde in June 1944 and operating from Newchurch, England. With 44 claimed V-1 kills whilst flying this aircraft in the summer of 1944, this former Typhoon pilot had the highest allied tally of flying bombs.



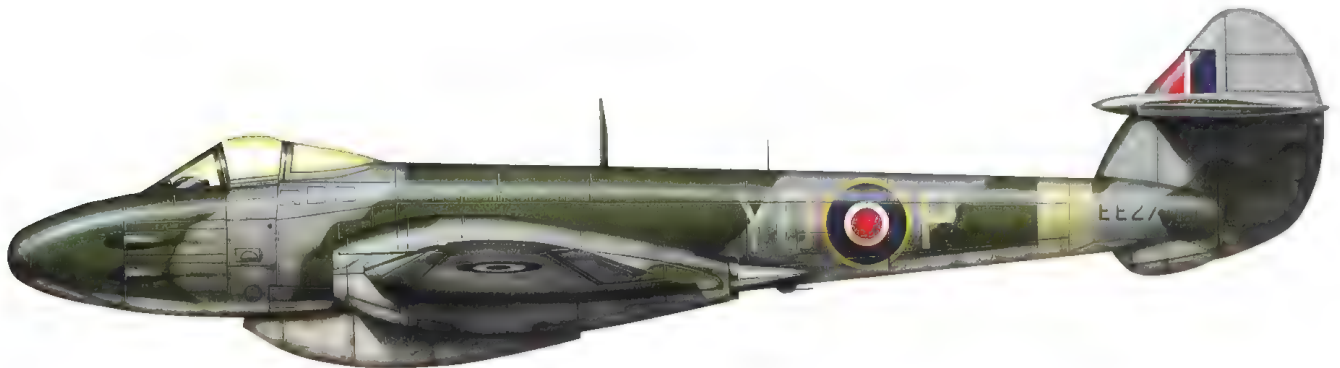
Hawker Tempest Mk V. The Tempest was the most powerful fighter in the British arsenal at the end of the war. This one was stationed at Wundorf, Germany in 1946 with No. 80 Squadron as part of the occupation forces. The markings are relatively colourful and a sign of quieter times. We can recognise the lightning bolt of No. 274 Squadron, its previous unit.



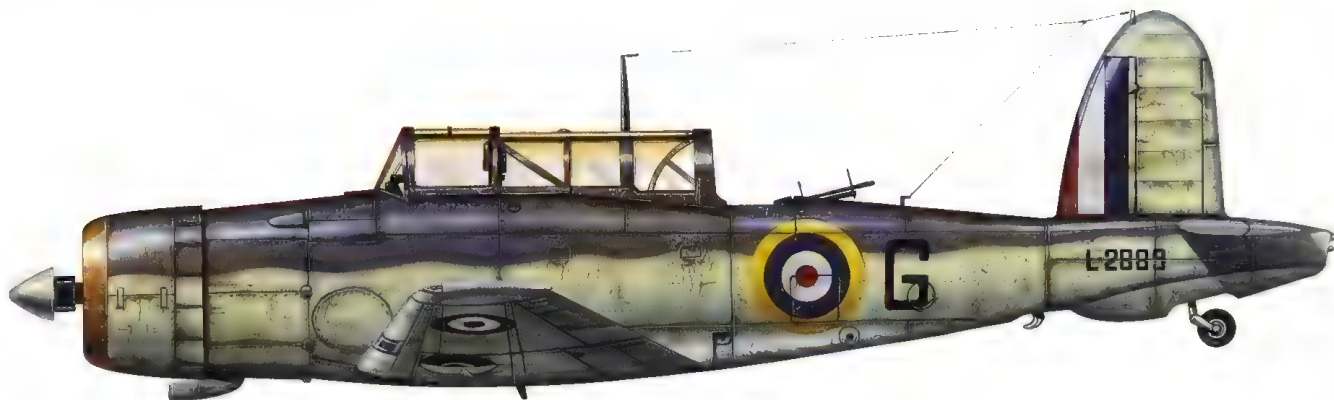
Hawker Tempest Mk V of No. 56 Squadron, RAF, at the beginning of 1945. Flown by Squadron Leader "Digger" Cotes-Preedy, it survived the war and was scrapped, as were many other aircraft, five years later.



Supermarine Spitfire FR Mk XIV with tear-drop shaped canopy. The aircraft portrayed here, NM 821 (of which the nickname "Fochinell" is painted in white on the nose), served with No. 414 Squadron before going to No. 2 Squadron shortly after the victory, in August 1945. Also intended for reconnaissance, it was optimised for low level flying thanks to wings that were shortened by 1.30 m, improving its handling.



Gloster Meteor F Mk 3. This was the first jet to enter service with the RAF, but it did not really take part in the conflict, contrary to the German Me 262 that was introduced in the summer of 1944. The aircraft portrayed here is an F-3 of No. 122 Squadron (122nd Wing), based at Nijmegen, Holland in the spring of 1945.



Blackburn Skua Mk I entered into service in November 1938 with the Fleet Air Arm. During the first two years of the war it was mostly used for dive-bombing missions or reconnaissance. The aircraft illustrated here belonged to No. 801 Squadron sent to Norway on board *HMS Furious* in 1940. It was aircraft of this type, belonging to No. 800 and 803 Squadrons that sank the German light-cruiser *Königsberg*, on 10 April 1940 off the coast of Norway.



Grumman Wildcat Mk III was part of the first batch of aircraft of this type delivered to the Royal Navy by the United States as part of the lend-lease agreement. The aircraft seen here, No. AX-733 was first assigned to the FAA (Fleet Air Arm) base at Donisbristle in Scotland. It later flew with No. 805 Squadron in the Mediterranean, operating from the North African coast in the autumn of 1941.



Fairey Albacore Mk I, serial number BF-759, of No. 832 Squadron, FAA, on board the aircraft carrier *HMS Victorious* towards mid-1942. This unit was tasked with the protection of allied supply convoys headed for the Soviet Union, whilst at the same time attacking German occupation forces in Norway.



Chance Vought Corsair F4U-1 Birdcage of No. 1835 Squadron, seen at Brunswick NAS, Maine, 1943. Despite its problems in making deck landings, the British were the first to use the Corsair on aircraft carriers as early as 1943, whereas at the time, only the American Marines used it from airfields, the first of which was Henderson Field at Guadalcanal.



Fairey Barracuda Mk II of No. 829 Squadron on HMS Victorious, Norway, April 1944. The Barracuda's wings could be folded up almost against its fuselage near the drag strut, easing its storage in the aircraft carrier's hangars.



Supermarine Seafire Mk.IIc of No. 885 Squadron, seen on board HMS Formidable May 1943 in the Ionian Sea after the North-African campaign. This aircraft is equipped with a Vokes air filter, as were most of the Seafires and Spitfires operating in the Mediterranean; this prevented sand from penetrating into the engine. It is also equipped with an arrestor hook under its belly.



Chance Vought F4U-4 Corsair of No. 1846 Squadron on board *HMS Colossus*, 1945. The plane is entirely painted in American gloss sea blue and has a black propeller spinner. Along with the Hellcat, it was one of the most American made fighters to serve with the FAA.



Fairey Firefly F. I of No. 1770 Sqn, *HMS Indefatigable*, China Sea, 1945. This unit took part in offensives against petrol refineries at Sumatra, the Formosa Islands and Sakishima Gunto. The aircraft is armed with four pairs of air to ground rockets under each wing.



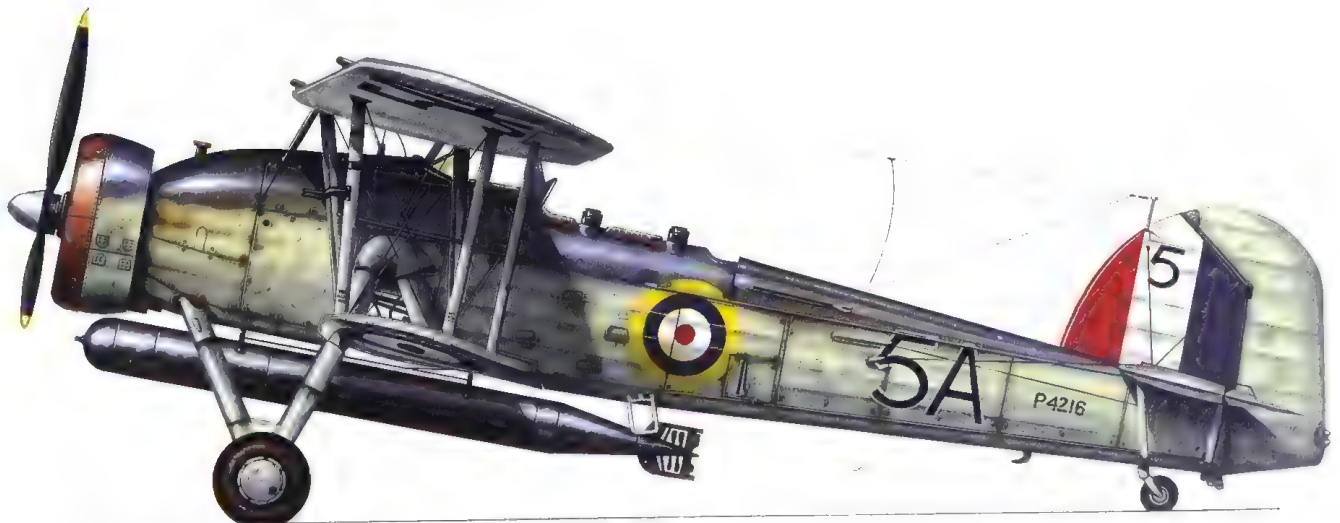
Grumman Hellcat Mk II of No. 808 Sqn on board *HMS Khedive*, May 1945. This aircraft carrier was part of the EIF (East India Fleet) whose mission was to support the 14th British Army in Burma and to counter the Japanese fleet based at Singapore. The camouflage scheme consists of extra dark sea grey, dark slate grey and sky, along with white stripes on the cowl, wings and tail plane.



Supermarine Seafire Mk IIC, MB-345 of No 885 Squadron, seen here on the aircraft carrier *HMS Formidable* in the Ionian Sea after the end of the North-African campaign in May 1943. Like most Seafires and Spitfires operating in the Mediterranean, this aircraft has been equipped with a Vokes air filter to prevent sand from entering the engine, and an under-belly landing hook.



Douglas Boston Mk III of No. 22 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, seen in March 1943 on Goodenough Island, has a camouflage scheme comprising of dark green and dark earth for the upper surfaces and medium sea grey for the lower surfaces. Sadly, the nose art, seen from side on, is hidden by the propeller boss; it shows an Asian character wearing spectacles (the Emperor no doubt) being hit on the head by a boomerang!



Fairey Swordfish Mk I of No. 821 Squadron on *HMS Ark Royal* in 1940-41. This aircraft carrier was used during the Norway campaign in the region of Narvik before being sent to Malta when the Italians declared war. Note the roundel with its wide yellow border and the size of the fin flash.



Vickers Wellington Mk Ia of No 215 Squadron, May 1940. The surfaces are camouflaged according to Air Diagram AD 1157 for twin-engine mono-planes, this being rounded Dark Earth and Dark Green patches, with only the lower surfaces painted black (Night). Note the large fin flash applied to the whole of the horizontal stabilizer following a directive introduced in May 1940. After operating in Northern Europe, No 215 Sqn was sent to India near Calcutta at the beginning of 1942 and re-equipped with Liberators the following year.



Vickers Wellington GR. Mk XIV of No 304 (Silesian) Squadron based at Chivenor (Great Britain), June 1944. The aircraft has the D-Day identification stripes, delimited here by two thin colour stripes, which appear lighter than the black in photographs. This is why we have portrayed them in red, this being due to a lack of proof, a mere suggestion. The lower and lateral surfaces are painted white, only the upper surfaces have retained their camouflage.



Vickers Wellington Mk Ic of No 99 (Madras Presidency) Squadron, stationed at Waterbeach (Great Britain) in November 1940. The upper surfaces have received the standard green and brown with the lower surfaces and sides in black. Note that the black paint has been applied very high up on the fuselage at the rear half of the plane, as stipulated by the «Special Night RDM2» directive. Also note the large 49 inch roundel (approximately 125 cm). No 99 Sqn was the first RAF unit to receive the Wellington and continued using it after its transfer to India in March 1942.



Avro Lancaster B.Mk III Type 464 Provisioning of No 617 Squadron. This aircraft was flown by Pilot Officer Les Knight, who finished off the Eder dam during Operation Chastise on 17 May 1943. Note the absence of the dorsal turret and the modification made to the fuselage to carry the 9,250 lb (4,200 kg) Upkeep bouncing bomb. The night camouflage is made up of dark green and brown (Dark Earth et Dark Green Earth) on the upper surfaces and matt black (Night) on the lower surfaces.



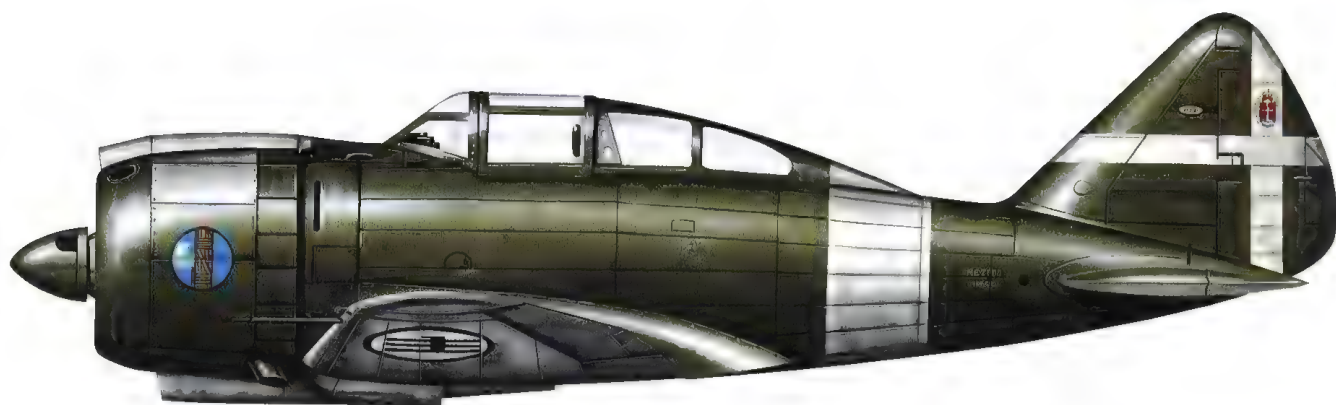
Avro Lancaster B.Mk I (Special) seen at Woodhall Spa in April 1945. This aircraft has a specific daytime camouflage made up of Dark Earth and Dark Green, these two colours being slightly lighter than those used for the night camouflage. The lower surfaces are painted in Ocean Grey. Amongst the modifications made, we note the absence of a nose and dorsal turret, the only defensive armament comprising of a four-gun tail turret. The bomb bay has been modified in order to carry special «Tallboy» or «Grand Slam» bombs.



De Havilland Mosquito FB Mk IV belonging to No 627 Squadron and seen here in June 1944 at Woodhall Spa. This squadrons Mosquitoes «worked» with the Dambusters before the latter were given their own aircraft. On 22 June 1944, DZ525, flown by F/L Gerry Fawke and the navigator F/O Tom Bennett, took part in the second raid against Wizernes in France to destroy the V2 rocket production and launch sites.



Fiat G.50 flown by Magg Mario Bonzano, commander of 20 Gruppo based at Maldegem. Whilst being transferred from Italy to Belgium between September and October 1940, two aircraft were lost due to weather conditions.



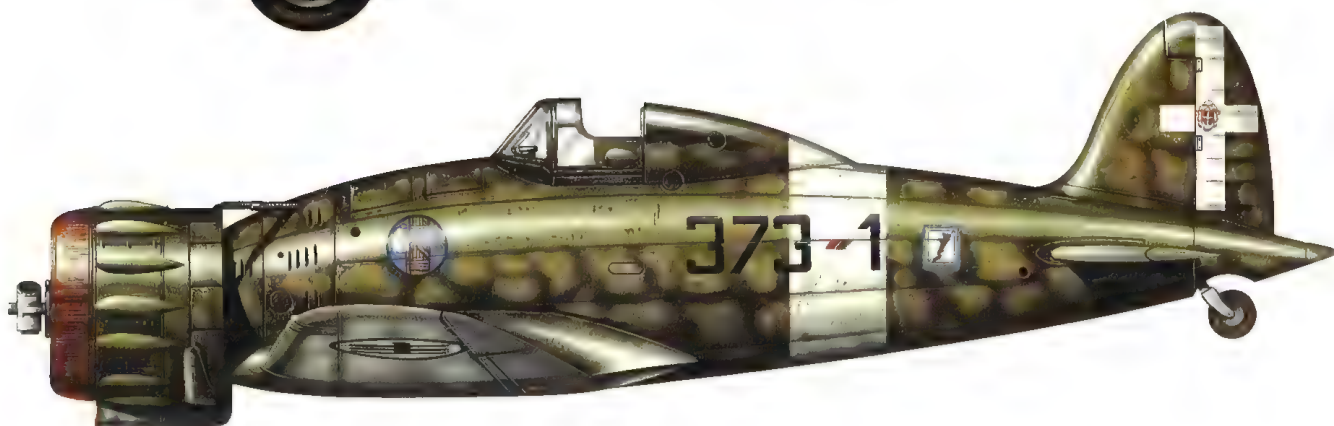
Reggiane Re 2000S Regia Aeronautica, 1st series, Italy, 1940. Cold shouldered by the Italians, the RE 2000 was sold under export, despite its poor performance, to the Hungarians and Swedes under the names of "Heja 1" and "J 20".



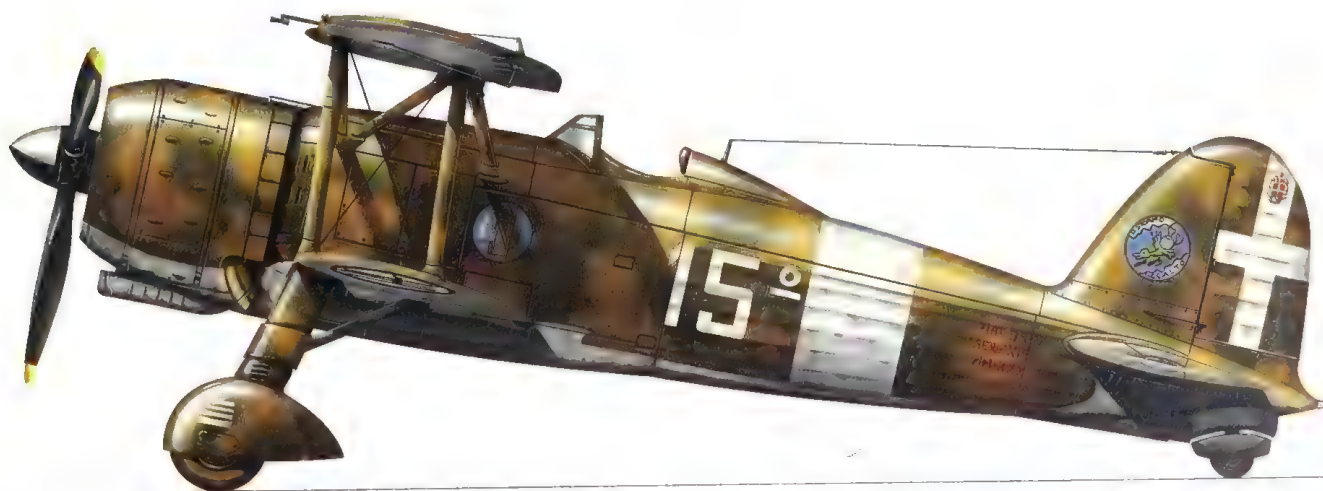
Fiat G.50 bis Freccia (Arrow) of 352a Squadriglia, 20 Gruppo, based at Cyrenaique in the summer of 1941. It has an unusual camouflage scheme comprising of long brown and green patches on the standard beige base. This aircraft is equipped with a filter in front of its engine air intake.



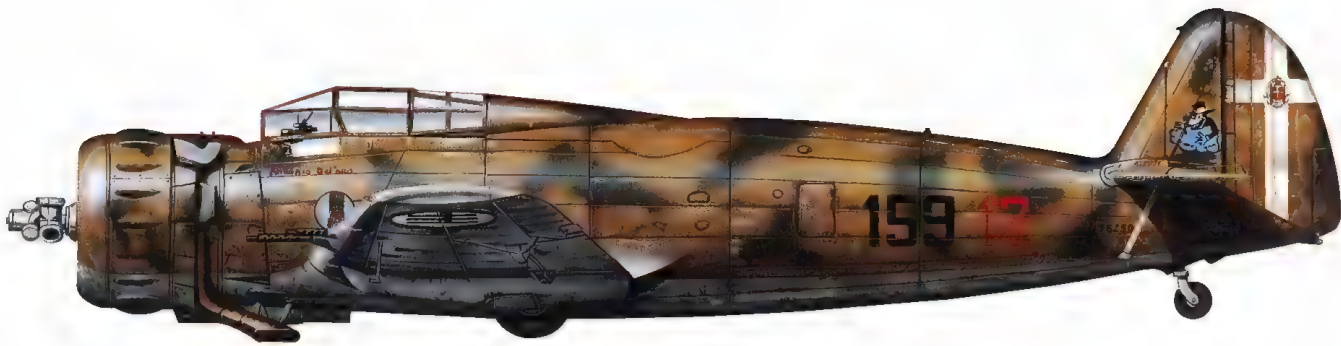
Fiat CR.32 Quater 160a Squadriglia, 12 Gruppo, 50 Stormo, Tobruk 1940-41. The Quater was the final and definitive version of the Fiat CR 32. A few aircraft of this type were ceded to Paraguay and Venezuela. In Spain, Hispano Suiza obtained the manufacturing licence.



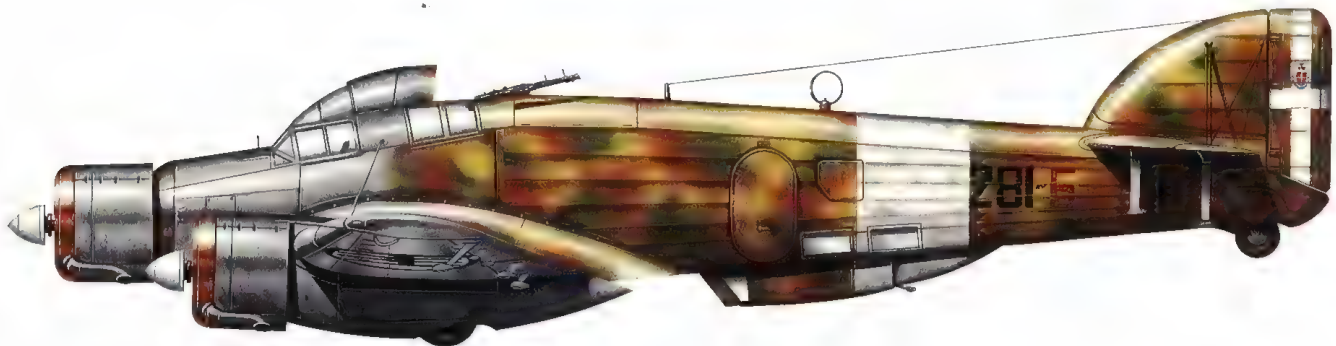
Macchi C.200 Saelta Lightning (arrow) of 373a Squadriglia, 153 Gruppo "Asso de Bastoni", winter 1941. At this time, the MC 200 in North Africa were used more in a ground support role as its former fighter role had passed on to its "little brother" and direct descendent, the Folgore.



Fiat CR.42 by Colonello Rafaello Colacicchi, commander of 15 Stormo d'Assalto based at Barce (Cyrenaica) in 1942. Apart from the Stormo insignia (a duck dropping bombs), this plane has the rank insignia of its pilot painted on the wheel covers. After being equipped with bomb racks, the CR 42 aircraft of this unit remained in North Africa from September 1942 to February 1943.



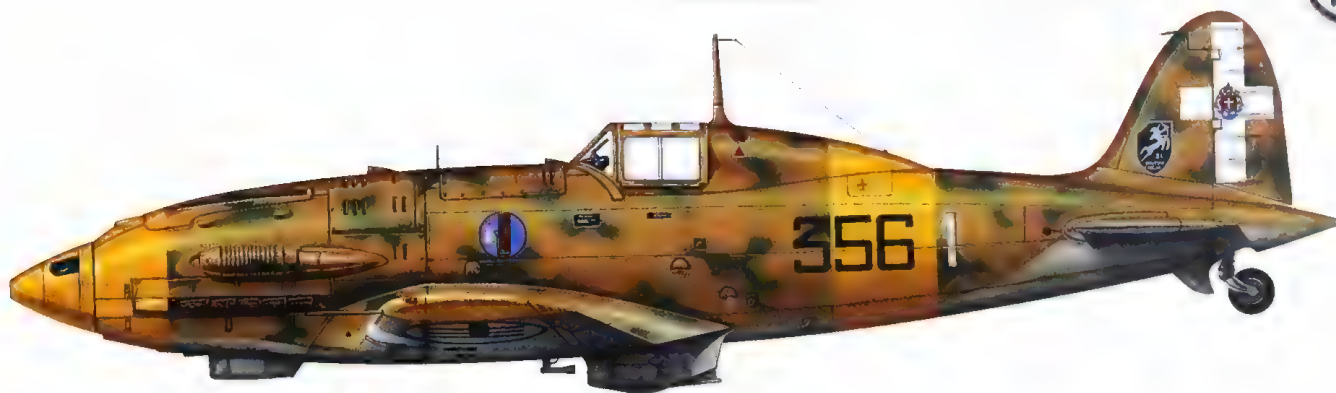
Breda Ba-65. 50 Stormo Assalto, 12 Gruppo, 159a Squadriglia, 1940. This aircraft (the code is unknown) bears the inscription "Antonio Dell'Oro" in remembrance of this captain who crashed into the ground during an attack against British tanks south of Barrani.



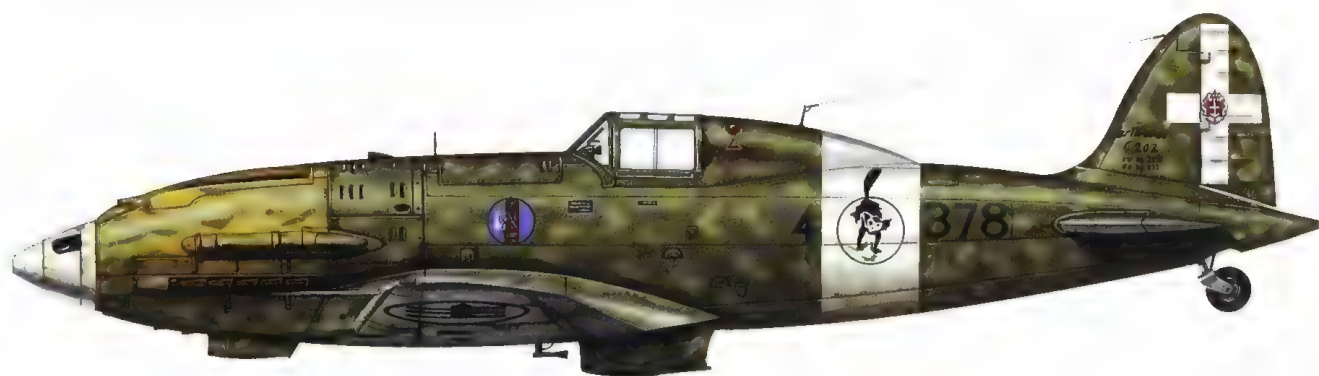
SIAI Marchetti S.79 Sparviero (Sparrow hawk) of 281a Squadriglia, 132 Gruppo Autonomo at Rhodes (summer of 1941). Originally designed as a bomber, this three-engine aircraft revealed itself, above all, to be an excellent torpedo plane. After the war, some of the 1,217 aircraft made, were used as transport planes or for towing targets; the surviving aircraft were scrapped in 1952.



Macchi C.202 Folgore Thunderbolt (lightning) of 153 Gruppo Autonomo, Libya 1941. The camouflage scheme of irregular green rings (anelli irregolari) on a sand base is typical of this aircraft on the North African front.



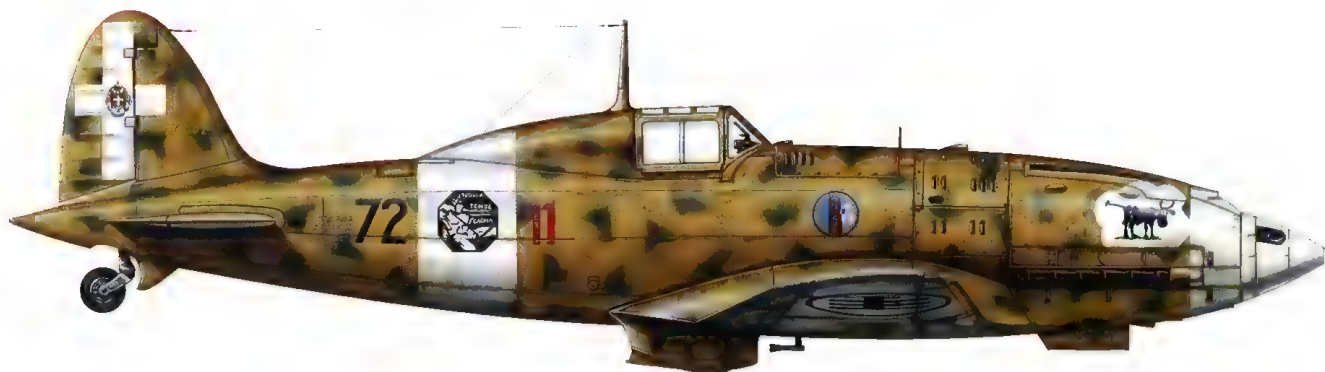
Macchi C.202 Folgore (Thunderbolt) of 356 Squadriglia, 21 Gruppo Autonomo deployed in Russia from September 1942 to May 1943. The aircraft has the camouflage scheme adopted by the Breda factory, with all of the lower surfaces and base of the fuselage sides painted in grey. It has here the yellow identification colour typical of the Eastern Front on the propeller spinner, a large part of the forward section of the engine cowl, the fuselage stripe (originally white) and the wing tips that have this colour only on the lower surfaces.



Macchi C.202 Folgore (Thunderbolt) of 378a Squadriglia, 51 Stormo with an interesting livery, but subject to caution, as it has been portrayed here from black and white photographs. It would appear that the aircraft, originally painted green (Verde Mimetico 2), has been given touches of sand yellow (Giallo Mimetico 4). Some illustrators have portrayed these patches accompanied with hazelnut brown (Nocciola Chiaro), which remains a possibility. The entire engine cowl, no doubt a replacement, seems to have received the opposite treatment, with a yellow base having been given irregular green patches. Note that the aircraft is equipped with a conventional air filter and does not have a radio mast as well as a tail-wheel fairing.



Reggiane Re 2001 of 152a Squadriglia (2 Gruppo, 6 Stormo) flown by Capitano Salvatore Teja. Based at Caltagirone (Sicily) beginning in May 1942, this unit frequently operated over Malta where this aircraft was seriously damaged.



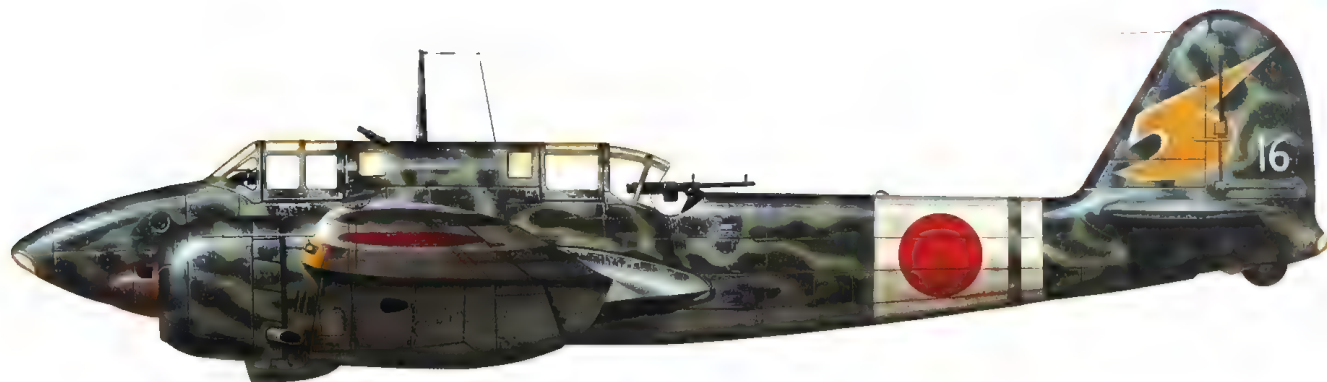
Macchi C.202 Folgore (Thunderbolt) of 72a Squadriglia, 1 Stormo based in North Africa. This is one of the many decorations accompanying the 1/32 Pacific Coast kit. This livery has the advantage of showing us the beautiful and very warlike representation of an archer, a very virile symbol that seems spoilt by the personal insignia of a silly-looking bull. The aircraft has the standard hazelnut colour (Nocciola Chiaro 4), mottled with green (Verda Oliva Scuro 2). This camouflage scheme, adopted by Macchi and SAI, covers all of the aircraft's sides, as well as the radiator.



Macchi Mc 202 Folgore (Thunderbolt) of 79a Squadriglia, 1 Stormo, 6 Gruppo, in Libya at the beginning of 1942. This aircraft was without doubt the best fighter of the Regia Aeronautica to confront the Allies.



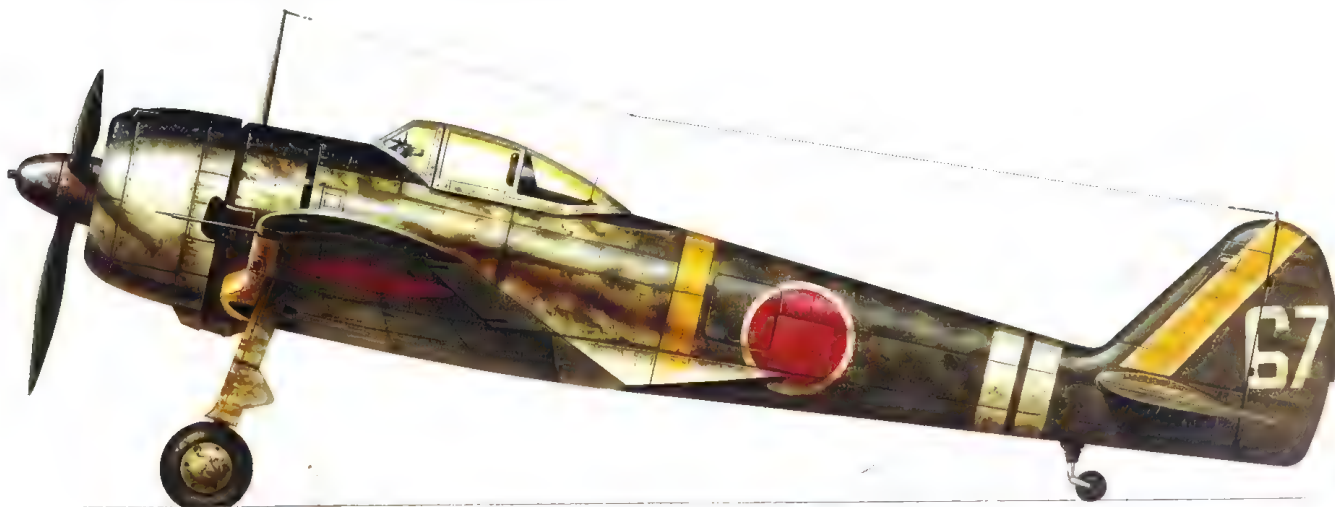
Junkers Ju 87B "Picchiatello" of 237a Squadriglia, 96 Gruppo. The previous German markings have been roughly painted over with dark paint and replaced by Italian markings. This aircraft has a fuselage insignia portraying a red-haired devil dropping a bomb.



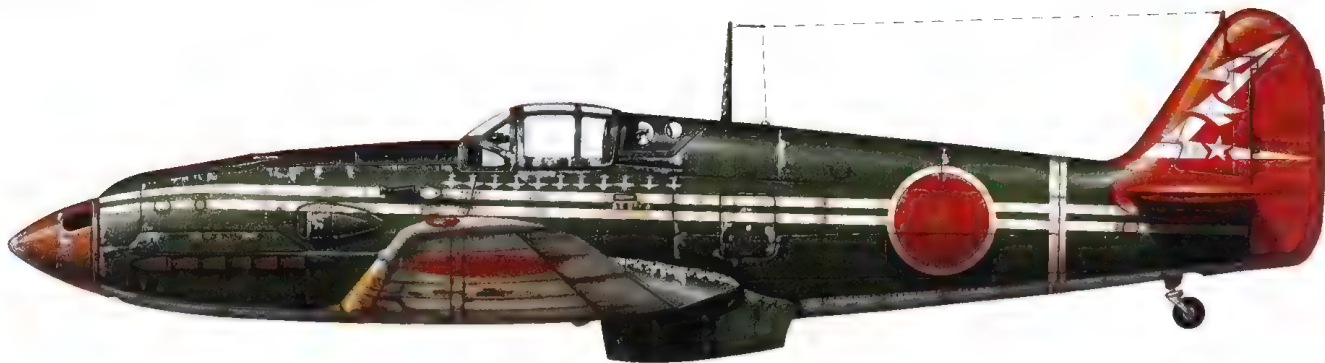
Kawasaki Ki-45 Kai Toryu (Dragon Slayer) "Nick" of 53 Sentai based at Matsudo near Tokyo at the end of 1944. These aircraft were specialised in attacking the B-29. Initially destined for long range escort duties, it failed in this role, but then performed well against the American "heavies", especially at night, thanks to its obliquely mounted cannon.



Nakajima Ki-44-IIb Shoki ("Tojo" for the Allies) of 85 Sentai operating from Canton in China, 1944. This powerful fighter with its forward positioned short wings, belongs to the group's general staff and more precisely its commander, Major Togo Saito. This unit converted to the Ki-44 in 1943 and was mostly tasked with protecting the refineries at Sumatra within the 9th Hikoshidan (air force). The Ki-44 was the first Japanese fighter designed for power and speed with a strong wing load that improved its climbing and diving capabilities. This led to many pilots being reticent at the beginning as they were used to lighter, more manoeuvrable and docile aircraft.



Nakajima Ki-43-II Otsu Hayabusa ("Oscar") of 3 Chutai, 25 Hiko Sentai, China 1944. After victorious beginnings in 1942-43, the Ki-43, the last old generation fighter of the Imperial Japanese Army, suffered serious losses and was progressively retrograded to a lesser role during 1944, being replaced by the better performing Ki-44 and, above all, the Ki-84. At the end of 1943, the Allies rebuilt a Ki-43 II with parts taken from wrecks in New-Guinea that they tested and compared with their own fighters in order to overcome its outstanding manoeuvrability.



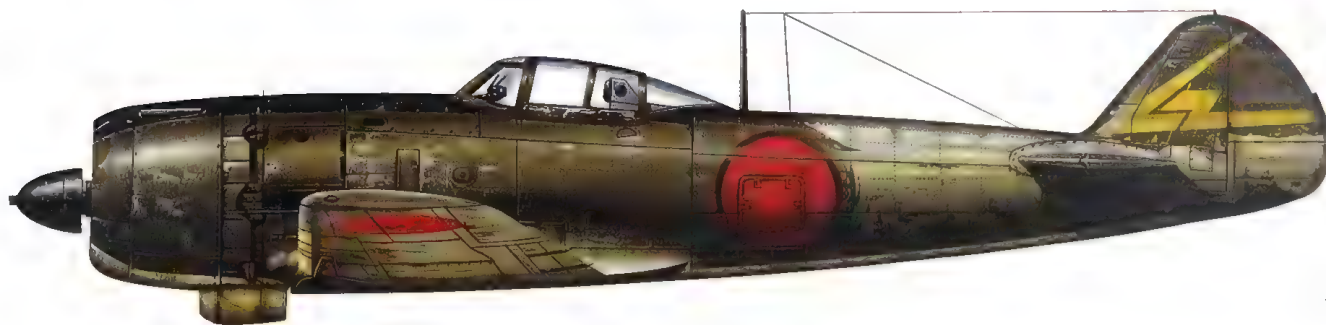
Kawasaki Ki 61-I Tei Hien ("Tony"). This aircraft had a cowl that was lengthened by 20 cm in order to place 20 mm Ho-103 cannon, plus an extra fuel tank between the two fire-wall bulkheads. This version of the "Tony" no doubt remains the most famous, or the most common in any case, in kit form. The aircraft belonged to 244 Sentai and was flown by Kobayashi Teruhiko who was credited with eleven kills which can be seen here in the shape of small planes. It was with this type of aircraft that the pilots of 56 and 244 Sentai crashed into the B-29 bombers; this attack technique often paid dividends and some pilots even managed to escape unscathed from these terrible collisions! Note that this aircraft has also been illustrated without the white fuselage stripe, or even without the anti-reflective paint on the upper engine cowl and with a black propeller spinner.



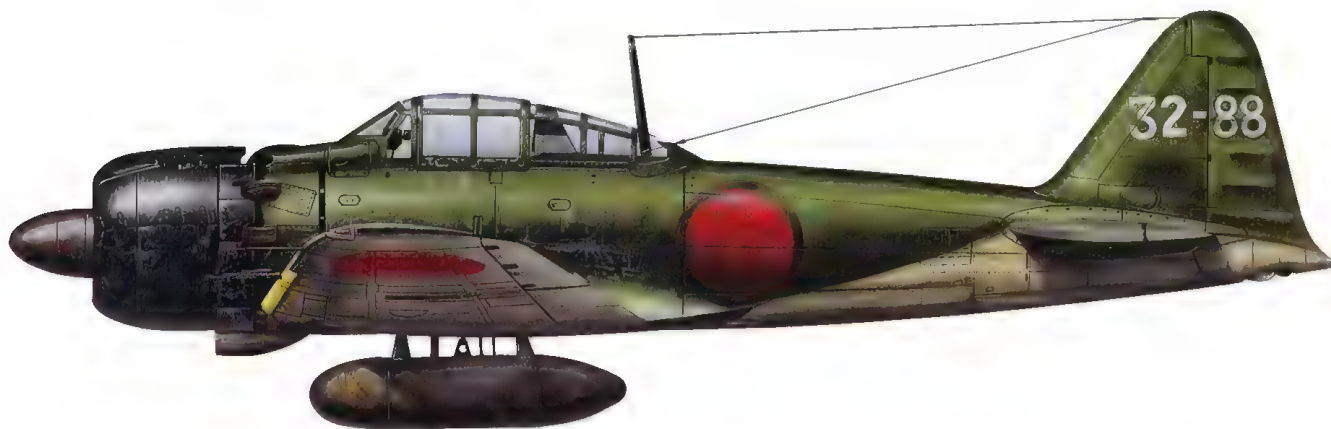
Kawasaki Ki 61-I Hei Hien ("Tony"). This livery is one of those proposed in the Hasegawa kit and corresponds to an aircraft of 56 Hentai based on the island of Saisyu in 1944 and armed, as it should be, with two cowl mounted 12.7 mm machine-guns. The wing armament that usually consists of two similar machine-guns has, on the other hand, been replaced by two German made 20 mm Mauser MG 151/20 cannon; Japan did not yet produce weapons of this calibre. The very sober livery allows us to immediately see the sleek lines of this fighter and offers model makers, apart from being able to make a change from the eternal mottled coat, the chance to practice adding a patina to the metallic surfaces, the latter being very worn as many photographs show.



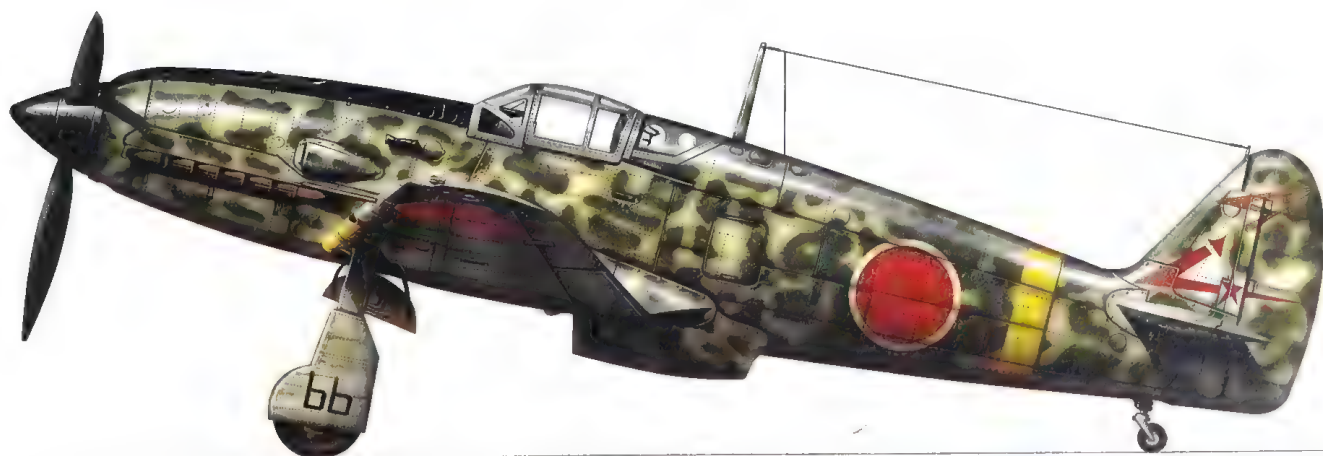
Kawasaki Ki 61-II Kai Hien ("Tony"). This elegant fighter of 56 Hentai should have been the definitive version of the "Tony". Equipped with a 1,500 hp HA 140 engine, its fuselage was lengthened by 22 cm, but its wings remained totally identical to those of its predecessors. It was also equipped with a new cockpit canopy that gave better rear visibility. Two versions were made whose only difference lay in their armament: two 20 mm cowl mounted cannon and two 12.7 mm machine-guns for the Ki-61-II Kai-Ko and four cannon for the II Kai-Otsu. Apart from many failings and an insufficient production of the engine, the HA 140 factory was also subjected to a raid by B-29 bombers and the Japanese had to find a solution to find engines for the available airframes. A solution was found by adapting the Mitsubishi Ha-112 radial engine that had a similar power output, but which was much more reliable. Put together hurriedly, the hybrid named Ki-100 became, however, according to its pilots, the best fighter of the Imperial Army; it just came too late....



Nakajima Ki-84 Hayate (Frank) of 52 Sentai, 3 Chutai at Tokorozawa, Japan in September 1945. Powerful, fast, manoeuvrable and well armed, the Ki-84 was without any doubt the best Japanese fighter of the Second World War. 3,400 of these aircraft in all versions were made.



Mitsubishi A6M5 ("Zéro") model 52C of 332 Kokutai, summer 1945. This was the most produced variant and the best performing of this fighter that appeared in July 1940. It is equipped here with a wooden fuel tank with four attachment points.

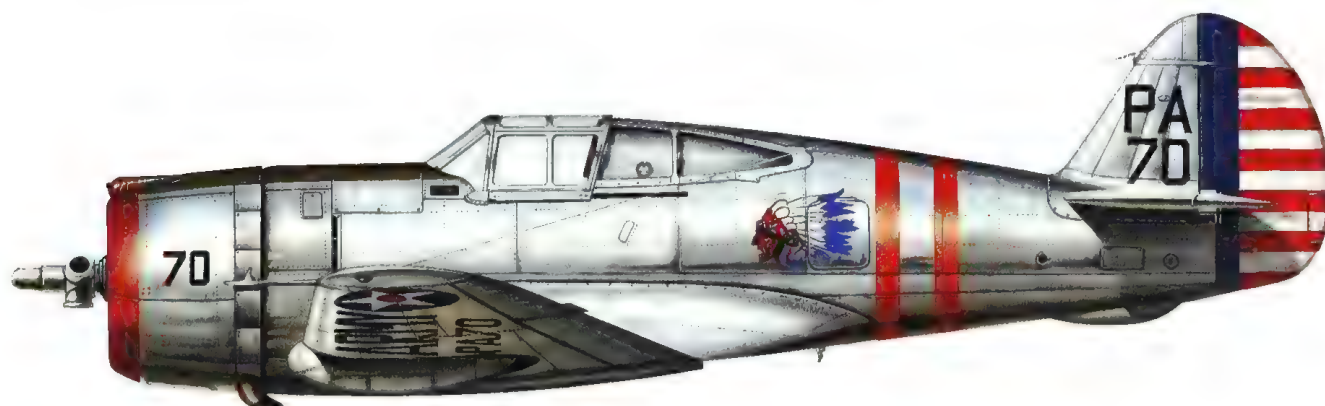


Kawasaki Ki 61-I ("Tony") of 244 Sentai, 1 Chutai at Chofu, Japan in September 1945. When the Ki-67 appeared in New-Guinea in mid-1943, the allied pilots thought they were up against an enemy plane derived from the Italian Macchi 202 due to its slender nose; thus naming it "Tony" for Antonio.





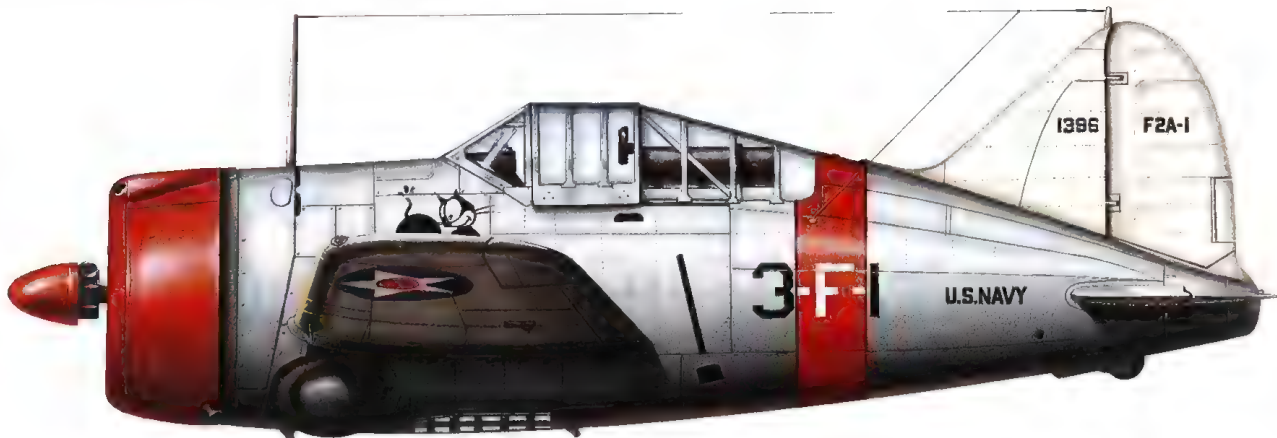
Curtiss P-36C of 27th Squadron, 1st Pursuit Group. The texts that accompany the many photographs of this aircraft are sometimes contradictory. Some state that this camouflage scheme created using water based paints and applied with a brush, was specially designed for war games. Others affirm that this hasty and particularly colourful livery was made to create a sensation during the USAAC participation in the famous Cleveland races in 1939 and that in no way was it used during war games for which this type of livery was sometimes applied. In any case, this mustard, olive drab and white livery is very attractive. The eagle is the insignia of the 27th Squadron; note also the woman's face painted on one of the undercarriage doors.



Curtiss P-36A of the 94th Pursuit Squadron, 1st Pursuit Group, in the standard livery of the time, this being bare metal, the national insignia on both sides of the wing surfaces and the fin flash. The aircraft portrayed here has also been given an olive drab anti-reflection patch on the engine cowl. The fuselage sides bear the Lakota Sioux head, initially the emblem of SPA 124, more commonly known as the "Escadrille Lafayette", in honour of the American volunteers that flew alongside the French pilots during the Great War. When the United States declared war, a large number of these pilots were transferred to the newly created 94th Pursuit Squadron, the official emblem of which was the famous "Hat in the Ring". However, as we can see, the Indian head continued to be part of the livery.



Vought SBU-2 Vindicator of VB-4 in 1939. The green colour shows that it serves on board *USS Ranger*. The roundel painted on the cowl indicates the aircraft's neutrality (Neutrality Patrol Star). When the United States declared war, the aircraft lost their bright livery, which was replaced first by an integral NS Light Gray, then a two-tone camouflage of NS Blue Gray (FS 35 189) and NS Light Gray (FS 36 440).



Brewster F2A-1 Buffalo, seen in 1939 during an exhibition in New York, already has the livery born by Fighting Squadron 3, the future and first unit to use this aircraft. It was one of the nine aircraft delivered to VF-3 and placed on board *USS Saratoga*. The fuselage has been left in bare metal and the tail fin is white, whilst the cowling and black bordered fuselage stripe are in the Squadron colours. The F2A-1 had a very brief career within the Navy as the aircraft made for the Navy headed for Finland after the latter was attacked by Russia. The Navy, however, received other Brewsters at the end of the 1940, but these were the improved F2A-2 version of its predecessor.



Grumman F4F-3A Wildcat of VF-3 seen at Hawaii in 1942 and carried on *USS Lexington* has the standard camouflage scheme used until January 1943 comprising of Non Specular Blue Gray and Non Specular Light Gray. This aircraft was flown by Lieutenant "Butch" O'Hare and has the markings on its fuselage of the five kills achieved by this pilot over Rabaul in a single engagement. The national markings are present on the rudder, which bears the stripes of the flag and also in the stars with their red circle. Note that Felix the Cat is present in a very discreet white circle under the windshield.



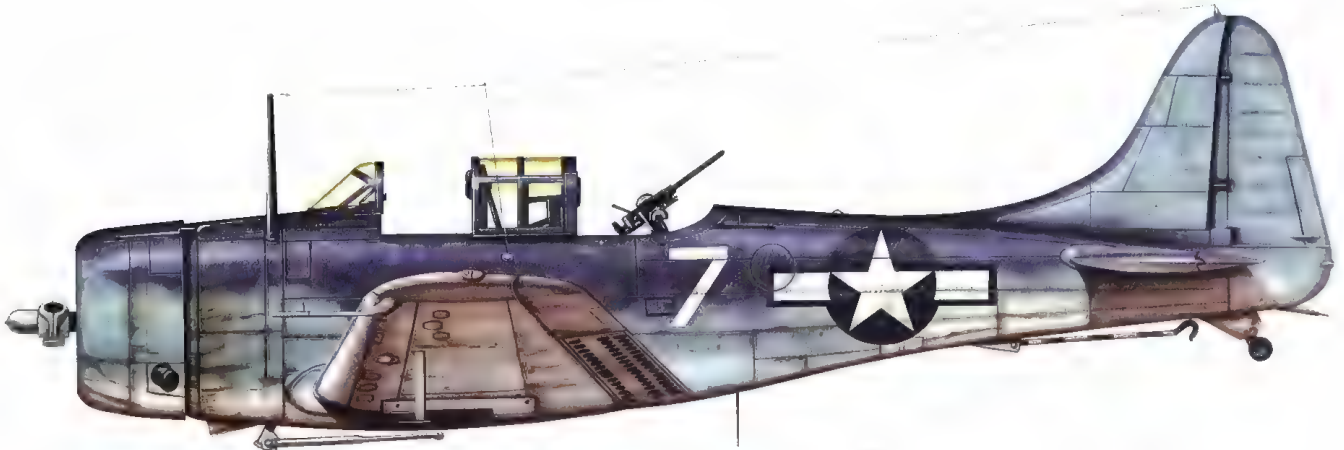
Brewster F2A-3 Buffalo of VF-2 in 1941. This aircraft has the monochrome Light Gray livery. Although the Navy preferred this aircraft to the Wildcat to become the first carrier-borne fighter, the Buffalo was a disappointment. Its operational career within the Navy was carried out within VF-2 and VF-3 on board the aircraft carriers *USS Lexington* and *USS Saratoga*. Marine Fighter Squadron 221 was also equipped with this type of aircraft during the Battle of Midway.



Grumman F4F-3 Wildcat of VF-8 on board *USS Hornet* in 1942. The camouflage scheme is Blue Gray and Light Gray. The aircraft has the large roundel in use up to May 1942. This aircraft carrier went down in history by launching General Doolittle's B-25 Mitchell's for their raid on Tokyo in April 1942. A raid that was more symbolic than anything else.



Supermarine Seafire Mk.III of No 809 Squadron, Fleet Air Arm, carried on board *HMS Stalker*. It was on this aircraft carrier that the planes of this squadron went to the Indian Ocean via the Suez Canal during the winter of 1944-1945. The aircraft has the camouflage scheme of the FAA, comprising of Extra Dark Sea Grey, Dark Slate Grey and Sky Type S.



Douglas SBD-5 Dauntless of VB-5 on board *USS Yorktown* in 1943. Beginning in this year, all unit insignia was, in theory, forbidden for security reasons and specific markings were limited to individual numbers and letters. With its 1,200 hp Wright R-1820-60 Cyclone engine, this version reached a maximum speed of 406 kph at an altitude of 3,050 metres. Its armament comprised of two nose mounted 12.7 mm machine-guns and two more, but 7.62 mm calibre at the rear of the cockpit. It could carry 726 kg of bombs under the fuselage and 295 kg under the wings. This aircraft was at last equipped with a Yagi aerial that was newly introduced at the time. In total, 2,965 SBD-5 were made.



Martin PBM-5 Mariner. This large Martin patrol flying boat (the biggest in the Navy) was mostly used in the Pacific and notably during the invasion of Okinawa. This version (model 162-F), is equipped with two Pratt and Whitney R-2800-34 engines capable of taking 11 JATO bottles, became the standard model used until the end of the war and it remained in production until June 1947. Its qualities also allowed it to take part in the Korean War.



Vought OS2-U Kingfisher. Apart from its pathfinder role, this small seaplane was intensively used to rescue pilots who had landed in the sea. Many of the latter owed their lives to this rather graceless Vought aircraft, which bears here the standard livery of Pacific operations of navy blue, intermediate blue and white.



Chance Vought F4U-A1 Corsair of VF 17 based on board *USS Bunker Hill* in 1943. The VF 17 «Jolly Rogers» was the first navy unit to go into combat with the Corsair. It had many aces within its ranks, such as Ike Kepford with 16 confirmed kills, plus another probable kill and one aircraft damaged. Note the unit insignia on the cowl and the red bordered roundel used during the summer of 1943.



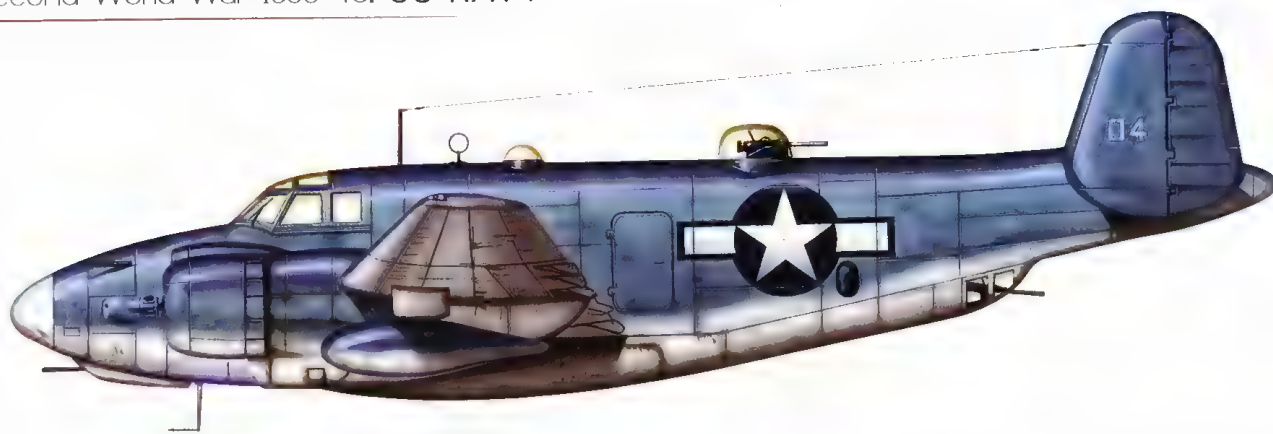
Consolidated PBV-5A Catalina of Patrol Wing No. 2. The aircraft has the standard two-tone livery (NS Blue Gray/NS Light Gray). The white star with a red centre and the 26 red and white stripes on the tail are typical of 1942.



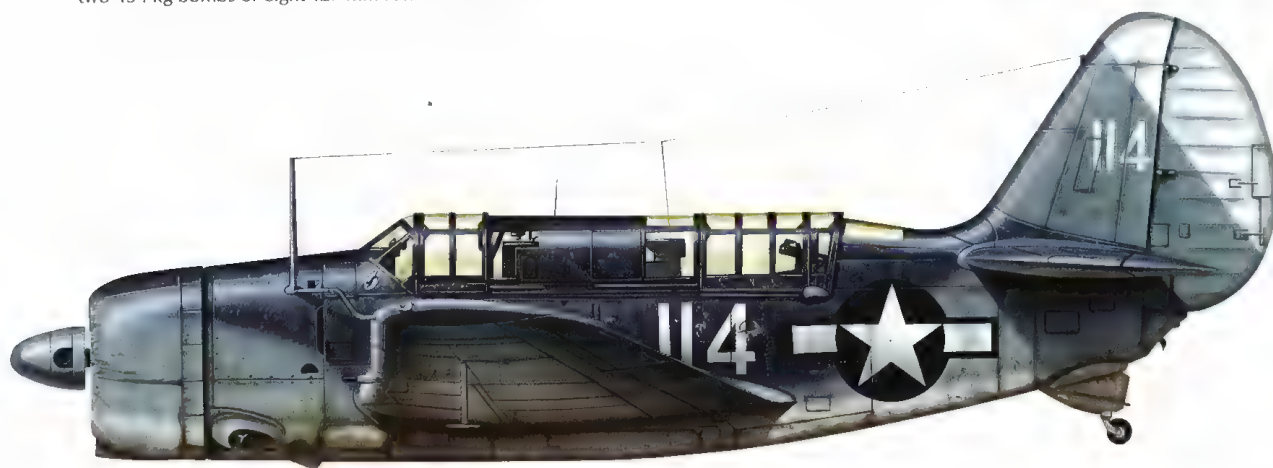
Chance Vought F4U-1 Corsair, flown by Lieutenant Jim Halford in July 1943. This plane was part of VF-17 "Jolly Rogers" on board the aircraft carrier *USS Bunker Hill*. Lieutenant Halford was an ace of VF-17 and had already obtained four kills at Guadalcanal with the F4F Wildcat before using his new steed. The VF-17 was the second unit of the US Navy to be equipped with the new fighter in the summer of 1942 at Norfolk, Virginia. The squadron became operational with this plane in the South Pacific a few months later.



Chance Vought F4U-1 Corsair "LA City Limits", Number 34 "LA City Limits" of VF-17 flown by Lieutenant (jg) Doris C. Freeman. Nicknamed Chico, Lt. Freeman achieved two kills with VF-17 and seven with VF-85.



Lockheed PV-2 Harpoon of VPB-139 in the Aleutian Islands in 1945. Longer and heavier and at the same time slower than its predecessor, the PV-1 "Ventura", it was used for patrolling, bombing and ground-attack. The "Harpoon" was powered by two 18-cylinder, 2,000 hp Pratt and Whitney R-2800-31 engines. It was armed with five 12.7 mm machine-guns and could carry up to 1,814 kg of bombs in its bomb bay. The wings could also carry two 454 kg bombs or eight 127 mm HVAR rockets.



Curtiss SB2C-4 Helldiver of VB-3 on board USS Yorktown in 1944. In 1934, this unit adopted the emblem of a pouncing panther. After having flown with the SBD Dauntless at Midway and Guadalcanal, VB-3 converted to the "Helldiver" which it used in the Philippines, Formosa and against the Japanese archipelago between October 1944 and March 1945. The SB2C-4 was powered by a 1,900 hp Wright R-2600-8 engine giving it a maximum speed of 452 kph. As well as its bomb bay payload that could reach 907 kg (with torpedoes and various explosive charges), this aircraft could carry 454 kg of bombs under its wings or eight 127 mm rockets. Its fixed armament comprised of two wing mounted 20 mm cannon and two defensive 7.62 mm machine-guns at the rear. 2,045 were made out of a total of 7,200.



Grumman F6F-3 Hellcat. This decoration that can be made using the new decals accompanying the new Eduard kit, is that of an aircraft of VF-16 on board USS Lexington anchored off Hawaii in 1943. It has the red-bordered star roundel that was officially used from June to August 1943. Naturally, this roundel, as attractive as it is visible, remained on many US Navy and Marine Corps aircraft for several months more. The aircraft bears, very discreetly, the emblem of the "Pistol Packin' Airdailes" characterised by a cartoon character of a dog wearing a leather flying helmet and the characteristic white jumper with red stripes; the left hand has a revolver whilst the right hand appears to be making an obscene gesture.



Grumman TBM-3D Avenger of VT (N)-90 on *USS Enterprise*, spring 1945. This aircraft is characterised by its lower wing surfaces painted with low visibility night blue, or black, instead of the regulation white.



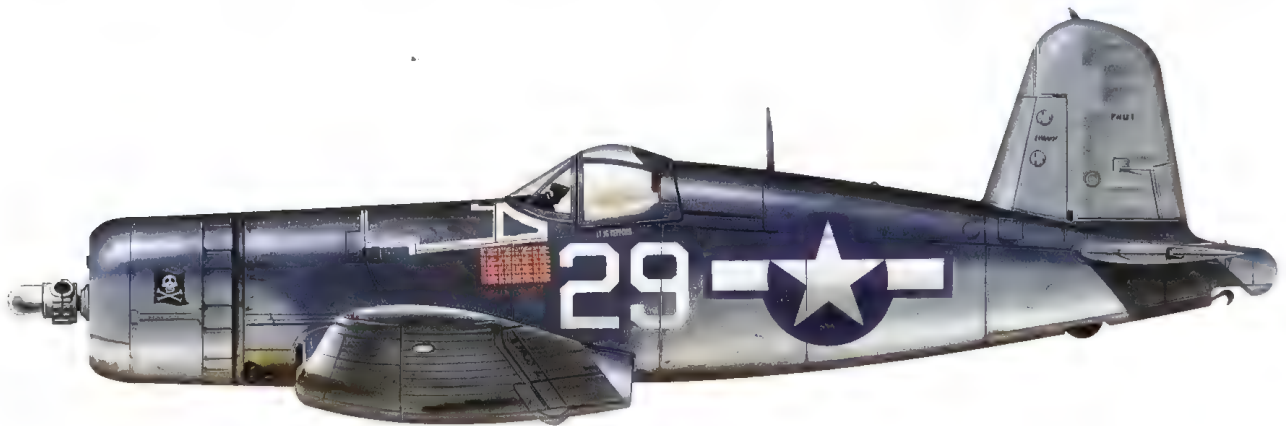
Grumman F6F-3 Hellcat. A good example of the numerous aircraft of VF-27, this F6F-3 on board *USS Princeton* bears the cat's mouth with its unattractive grin adopted by this unit. This warlike decoration, added to the camouflage scheme of Non Specular Sea Blue, Non Specular Intermediate Blue and Insignia White, is the most spectacular used by this second model "cat" made by Grumman. The red border has disappeared and has been replaced by a more discreet border of Insignia Blue. The three tone camouflage scheme, exposed to the formidable weather conditions looks "tired" and is a real godsend for model makers expert in "heavy" patina techniques.



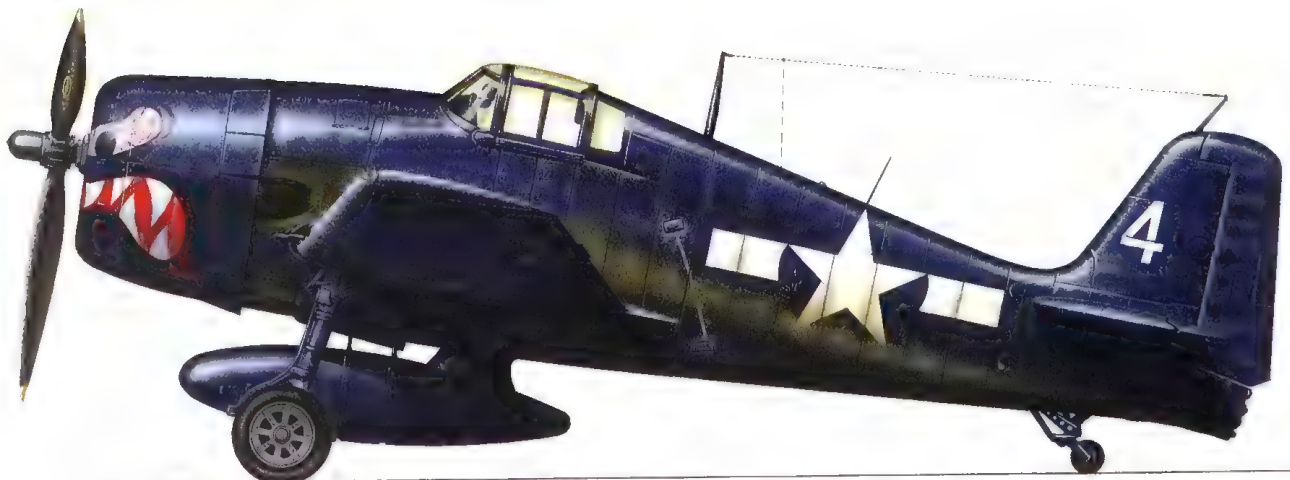
Grumman F6F-5N Night Hellcat of VMF (N) 541 "Bat Eyes", in May 1945 at Ulithi atoll. The gorgeous pin-up chosen to brighten up the dull, but efficient Midnight Blue colour, was inspired by a bathers illustrated by Alberto Vargas on the September page of the 1944 calendar.



Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat of VF-94 on USS Lexington in July-August 1945. The white tail markings allowed for a rapid identification of the plane's aircraft carrier.



Chance Vought F4U-1A Corsair. This F4U-1A is one of the most famous of the Navy. Lieutenant Ira Kepford was credited with sixteen kills. This F4U-1A (BN 55995), designated 29, operated from the Bougainville islands in January 1944.



Grumman F6F-3 Hellcat. This final production Hellcat F6F-3 was also with VF-27 on USS Princeton and is perhaps seen here on USS Essex, after the Princeton was torpedoed and sunk in Leyte Gulf on 24 October 1944. The aircraft has been given the dull monochrome Glossy Sea Blue livery that was officially introduced in March 1944. The "Star and Bars" have been stencilled on in white paint directly over the fuselage colour. Luckily, this austere livery has retained the scary and warlike "Cat Mouth" which makes up the only decoration on this Hellcat.



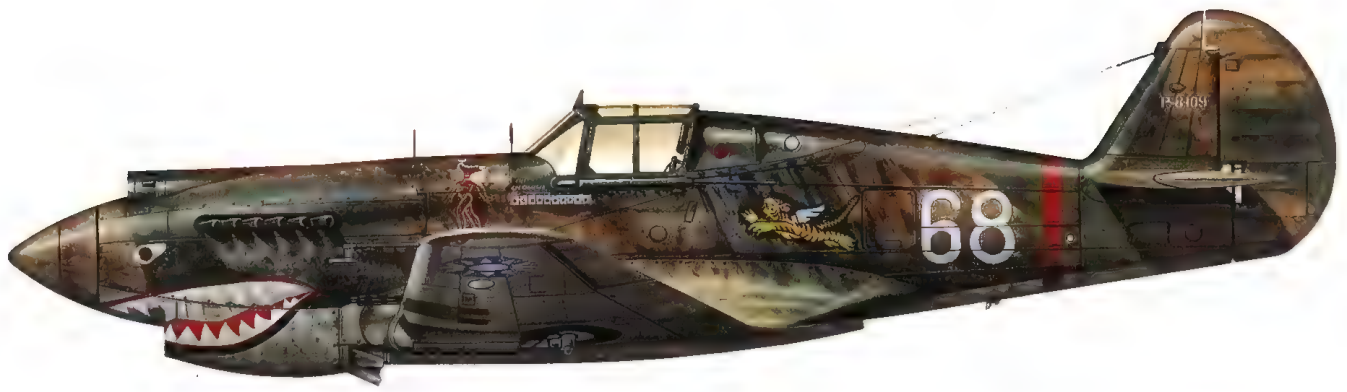
Vought F4U-1D Corsair of VBF-10 on board *USS Intrepid* engaged in the invasion of Okinawa in April 1945. Despite its difficult beginnings where it was mostly used by the Marines from land bases, the Corsair managed to shoot down 2,140 Japanese planes for a loss of only 189 in aerial combat, giving it a surprising success rate of 11.3 to 1.



Vought F4U-1C Corsair of VBF-99 on board *USS Shangri-La* (CV-38) in July 1945. This version was armed with four 20 mm cannon instead of the usual six 12.7 mm machine-guns. 200 of these were made during the Second World War.



Chance Vought F4U-1D Corsair of VF-84 on board *USS Bunker Hill* (CV-17) in 1945). With its wings folded and flaps down, the Corsair waits to be re-armed with HVAR (High Velocity Aerial Rocket) rockets before flying towards Iwo Jima.



Curtiss Hawk H-81-A2 of 3rd Squadron, flown by Chuck Older. This plane is one of the best known and most photographed of the Flying Tigers. It has been touched up with dark green paint between exhaust pipes and the shark's eye. Six types of shark mouth were painted on P-40B/C of the Flying Tigers, differing in their outline and the presence, or not, of blue inside the lips.



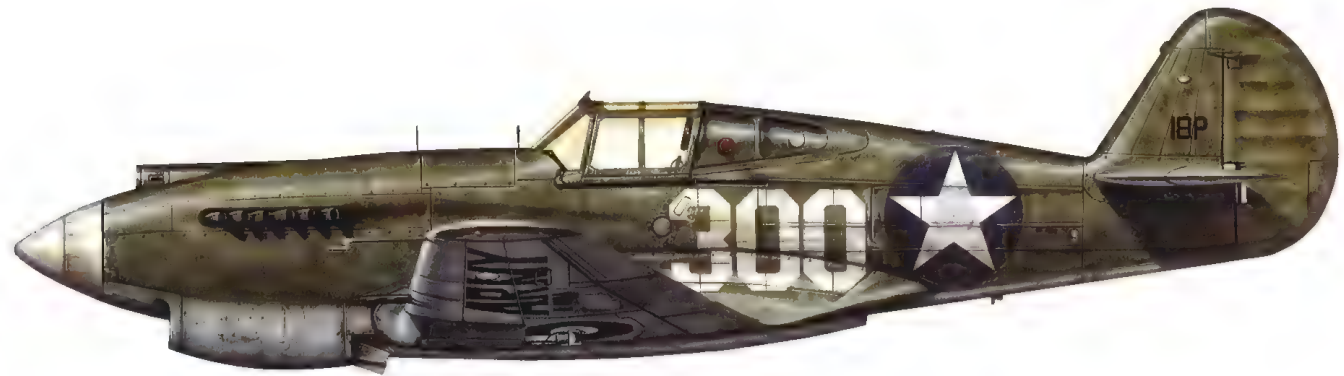
Curtiss Hawk H-81-A2 flown by Greg Boyington during his spell with the Flying Tigers. This aircraft belonging to the 1st Pursuit Squadron, has been touched up with new paint under the cockpit and on the rudder. The white stripe identifies the planes of the 1st Sqn., blue for the 2nd Sqn. and red for the 3rd Sqn.



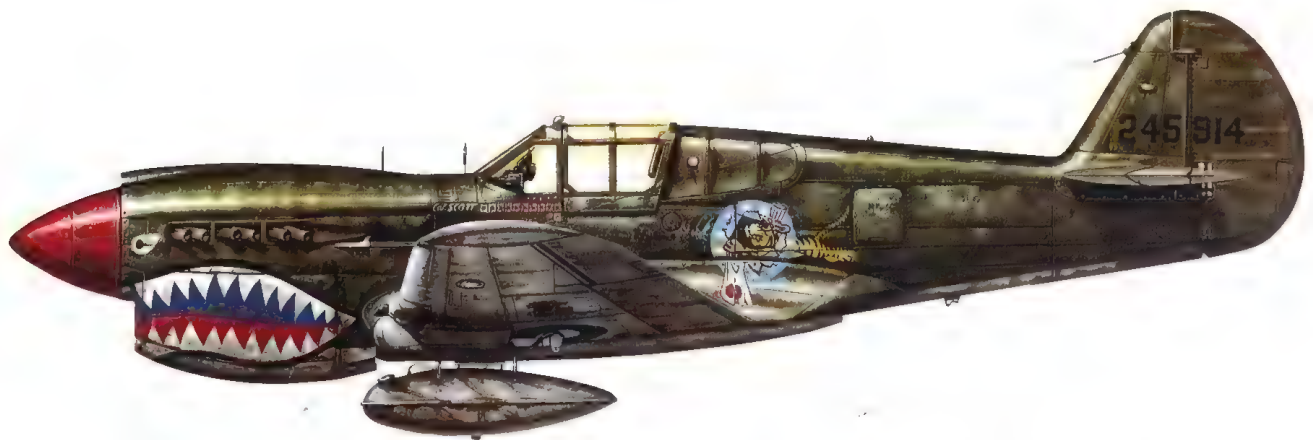
Curtiss Hawk H-81-A2 of 2nd Squadron, was first used by John Petach and Bob Layher, then by R.T. Smith of 3rd Squadron with new insignia (flying tiger and red angel). The latter varies from one plane to another and was painted on both sides of the cockpit on some aircraft. The left side had a small cartoon of its pilot riding a bicycle whilst holding a camera.



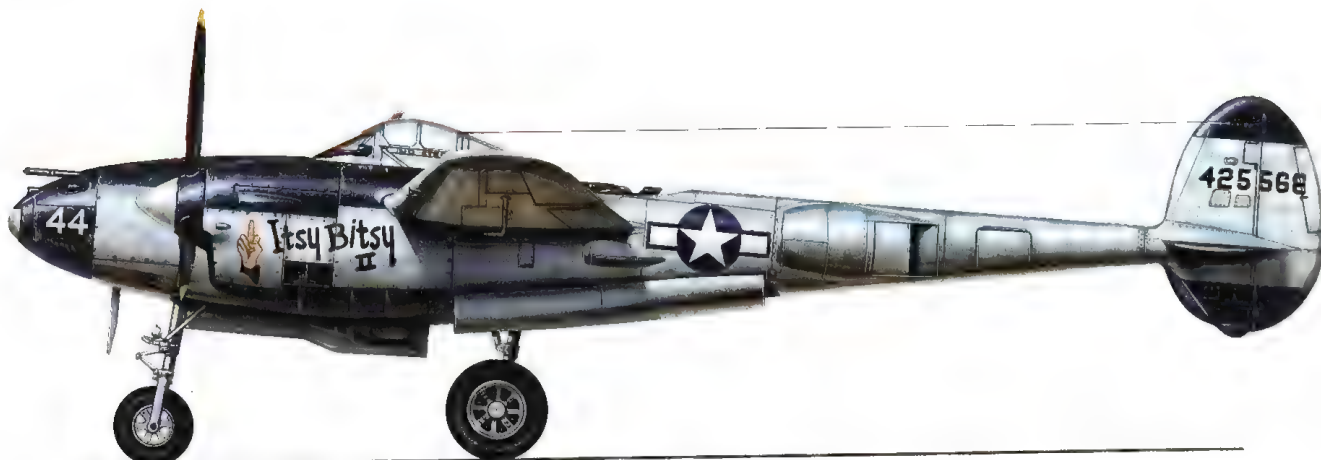
Curtiss P-40E. The Flying Tigers received six aircraft of this type in March 1942 before they were disbanded in July the same year with some of the pilots and mechanics joining the USAAC and the China Task Air Force.



Curtiss P-40B of the 18th Pursuit Group, 78th Pursuit Squadron, seen at Bellows Field, Pearl Harbour during the Japanese attack of 7 December 1941. It has the standard camouflage scheme of Olive Drab/Neutral Gray. On period photographs it appears that the red circle of the roundel has been masked over with white paint. At the time, this was one of the highest performance aircraft in the American arsenal, although it could not rival its Japanese counterpart, the Zero.



Curtiss P-40E Warhawk of the 23rd Fighter Group staff, 14th Air Force, flown by Colonel Robert L. Scott, the group's first commander. The group was formed in July 1942 after the Flying Tigers were disbanded as an independent unit and integrated into the 10th and 14th AF. The plane bears the markings of eleven kills and the tiger jumping through the Chinese roundel with a Japanese flag in its claws and wearing a top hat in American colours. The only reminder of a glorious past is the shark mouth at the front which progressively disappeared from the end of 1944 onwards, when the P-51 Mustang came on the scene. The camouflage scheme comprises of Olive Drab and Neutral Gray.



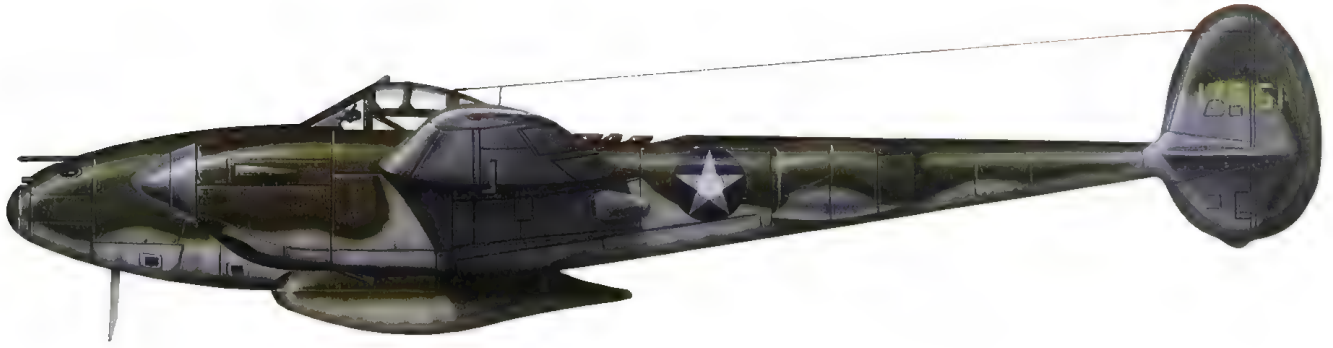
Lockheed P-38L-5-LO Lightning "Itsy Bitsy II" (inspired by a song) flown by Major George Laven of the 8th FS/49th FG at Okinawa in 1945. The Lightning was without any doubt, and in most of its versions, the USAAF's best Pacific fighter. As well as Japanese fighters and seaplanes, Laven did not mind attacking trains either, destroying 17 in all...



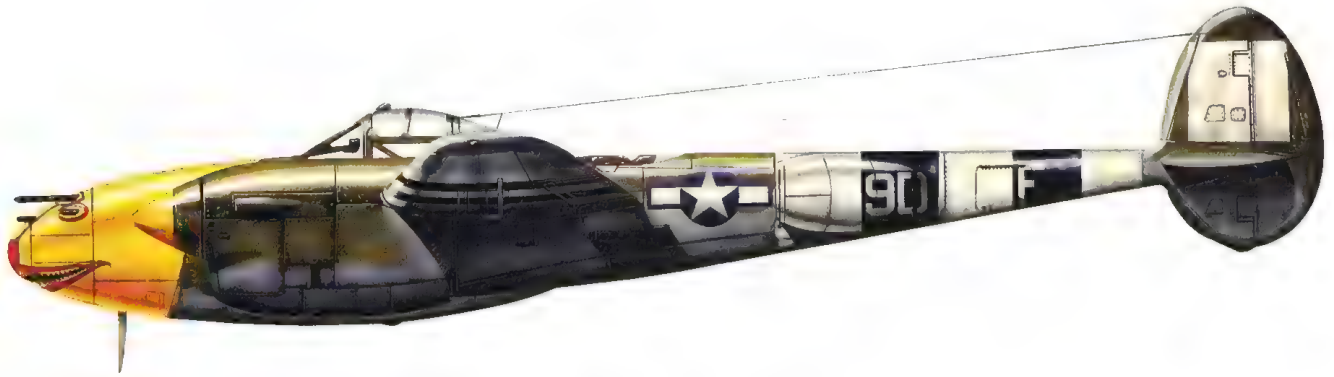
Lockheed P-38G-15 Lightning of the 37th Fighter Squadron/14th Fighter Group based in Algeria at the start of 1943. This aircraft was flown by Captain Herbert Ross who achieved seven confirmed kills between May and September 1943. The name "2nd Little Karl" refers to the pilot's second son. The double vertical yellow stripes on the tail booms indicate that the pilot was Flight Leader at this time.



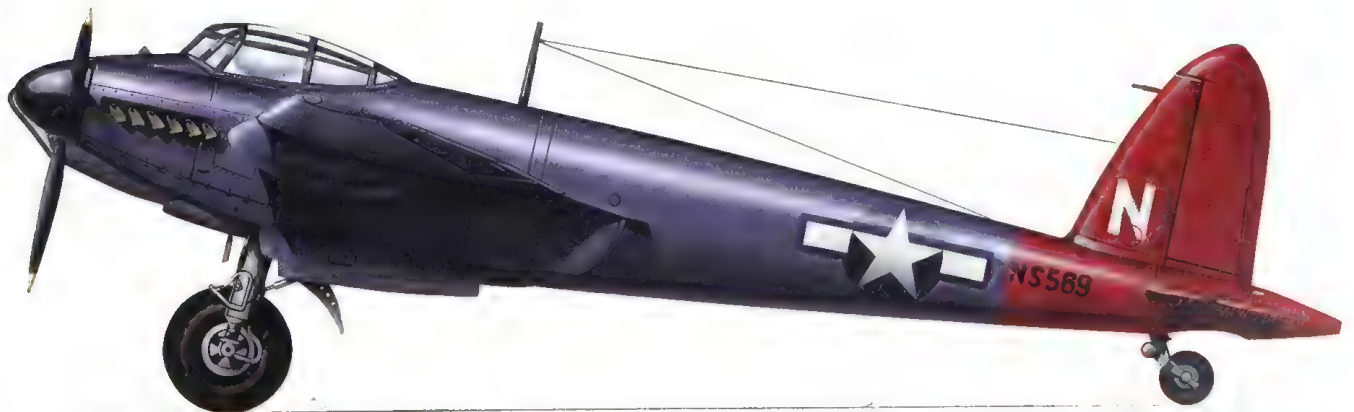
Lockheed P-38J "Mon Amy" flown by Lt. Herbert Hatch with the 71st FS/1st FG based in Italy. This aircraft took part in the low level raid against the Rumanian refineries that followed the failed "Tidal Wave" first mission. The kill markings are curiously represented by swastikas. One of the explanations given is that during dogfights, the American pilots confused the IAR 80 with the Fw 190. Some sources are more doubtful and put forward another explanation, stating that it would have been more honourable, in victory or in defeat, to have been confronted by German fighters.



Lockheed P-38F Lightning of the 14th Fighter Group seen in Great Britain at the end of 1942. The aircraft is portrayed here during a stop-over in Iceland and Scotland is still new and has no distinctive insignia, apart from red circle which has been painted over in white to make it less visible, but also due to the new regulations put in place at the beginning of 1942.



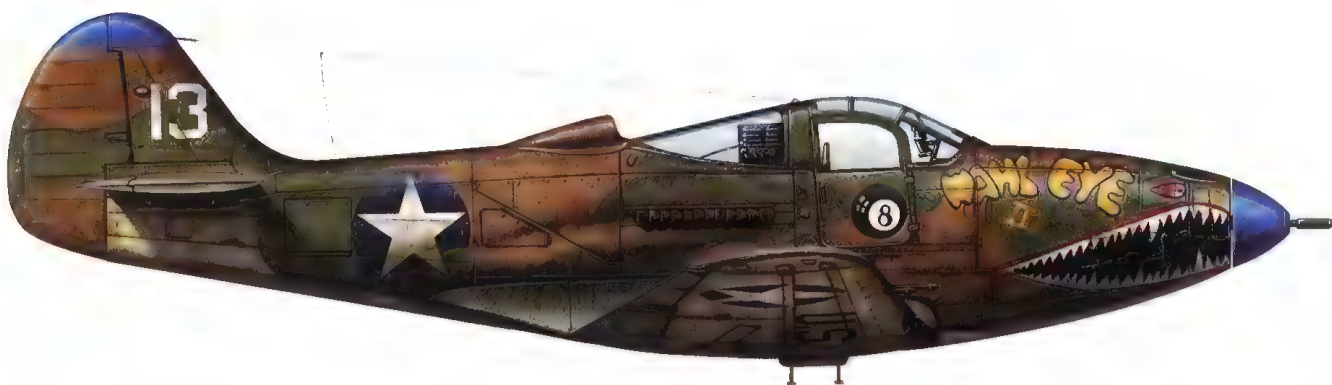
Lockheed P-38J Lightning of 485th Fighter Squadron, 370th Fighter Group, 9th Air Force. The Lightning was used massively on June 6 as its distinctive shape made it instantly recognisable to the troops on the ground (and, therefore, the anti-aircraft gunners). The Germans did not have any plane in their arsenal that resembled it.



De Havilland PR Mk XVI Mosquito of 25th (Recce) Bomb Group based at Watton at the start of 1944.



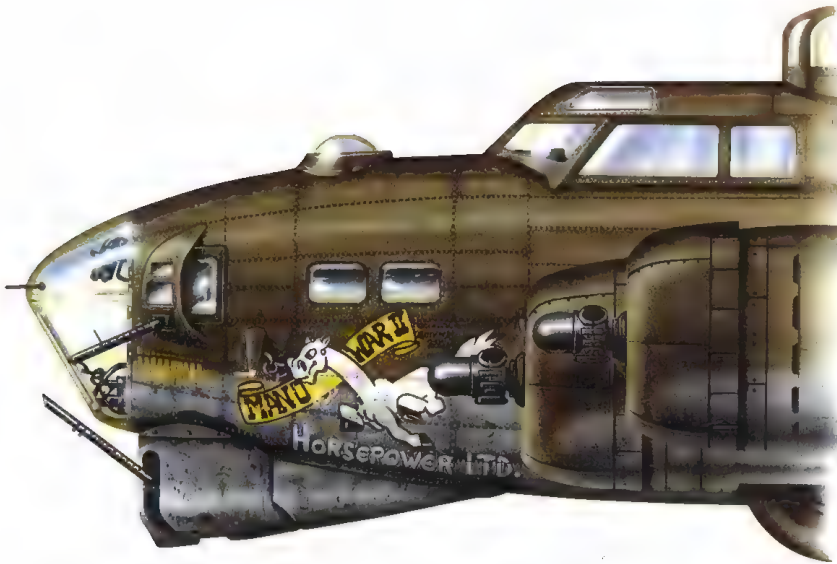
Bell P-39K-1 Airacobra (Model 26A), was the new name given to the P-39G which itself descended from the P-39D-2. The main characteristic of this aircraft was its 1,325 hp Allison V-1710-63 engine designed for optimum performance at low altitude. Its armament was standard, apart from the cannon, which, during production, went from 20 to 37 mm. The aircraft portrayed here belonged to 40th FS/35th FG and was flown by Lieutenant Mc Donough in New Guinea in 1943. Mc Donough shot down two "zeros" with this plane, but became an ace with the same group in a P-47D. This aircraft has often been illustrated with a white "23", however, some black and white photographs show up a slight difference of shade compared to the white jacket of the quarrelsome Donald Duck. It is for this reason that we have chosen, with caution, to portray this number in yellow. Also, the propeller spinner and the top of the rudder have also been shown in their original colour of Olive Drab, but here too, one should be careful in the interpretation of the grey tones on period photographs, not to mention that some parts might have been replaced.



Bell P-400 Airacobra, seen in New Guinea in 1942, belonged to 36th FS/8th FG and was named "Whal Eye", really meaning "Whale", but which was a pun on the pilot's name, Lt. Eugene Wahl. Also, on the left side of the fuselage, there is the inscription of "Pat" as well as a number 13 in place of the eye seen on the other side. The doors are decorated with the famous "Eight Ball", the insignia of the 8th PRS (Photo Reconnaissance Squadron). The camouflage scheme is in the "British style" of Dark Earth/Dark Green/Sky and it has been particularly worn by the harsh weather conditions of the Pacific. The red circle on the roundel has been painted over in white following a new directive, in order to avoid any confusion with the Hinomarus of the enemy aircraft. The P-400 was powered by a 1,150 hp Allison V-1710-35 engine and was armed with a 20 mm Hispano-Suiza cannon and two wing-mounted 12.7 mm (cal .50) machine-guns.

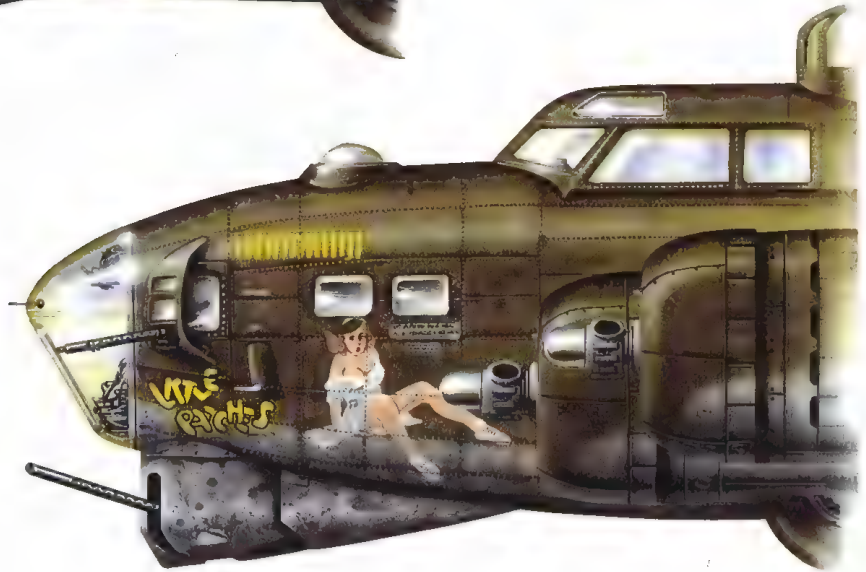


The P-39Q was the final version of the Airacobra, the most produced and the most used. It was powered by a 1,200 hp Allison V-1710-85 with a wing armament initially comprising of four 7.7 mm machine-guns, replaced by two pods each carrying a 12.7 mm MG, the pods were, as it happens, not always installed. Belonging to the 71st TRS/82nd TRG based in New Guinea in 1944, the aircraft seen here, "Snooks II", was flown by 1st Lt. William Shomo, who justly became a famous ace in January 1945 after having shot down seven Japanese planes during one mission with a reconnaissance Mustang F-6D nicknamed "Snooks 5th", something for which he was later awarded the Medal of Honor. It ought to be mentioned that in civilian life, W. Shomo worked for an undertakers... The camouflage scheme, made up of the standard OD and Neutral Grey, has been given white "high visibility" leading edges and tail unit. The star was initially given long white bars, then an Insignia Blue border, as per identification directives.



Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress "Man O War II" of 332nd BS, 91st BG (8th Air Force), based at Basingbourne in England, 1944. The second of three B-17 bombers to be named "Man O War", this aircraft bears the inscription "Horsepower Ltd." in reference to a perilous return flight from a raid on one engine!

Boeing B-17G Flying Fortress "Little Patches" another B-17G of 91st BG (8th Air Force) at Basingbourne in 1944. This aircraft's name stems from the numerous bullet holes and damage that have been "patched up". The pin-up is inspired by a Gil Elvgren illustration portraying a tennis-playing woman who has fallen on the ground and whose headband has been replaced by an officer's cap.



Consolidated B-24D Liberator "Hall Columbia" of 344th Bomber Squadron, 98th Bomb Group (Heavy) "The Pyramiders". This plane was flown by Colonel John "Killer" Kane, the Group Commander. The nose-art portrays a very symbolic American eagle painted on the Sand and Neutral Grey camouflage. This Liberator crashed in Cyprus on 1 August 1943.



Boeing B-17F nicknamed "Memphis Belle" of the 8th Air Force. This aircraft is without doubt the most famous "Flying Fortress". The young women portrayed on the nose was inspired by a George Petty illustration, a fashionable pin-up artist of the time. On the left side she wears a blue bathing costume, but on the right side it is red.



Boeing B-17G "Short Arm". a B-17G-60-DL (serial number 46616) of 833rd Bomber Squadron, 487th Bomber Group. As well as its yellow tail unit and wingtips, it has blue and red stripes around the nose and wings.



Boeing B-17F. "Assembly plane" of the 379th Bombardment Group. This was an unarmed Flying Fortress used for the formation of bomber boxes.



Consolidated B-24D Liberator "Brewery Wagon" of 512th Bomber Squadron, 376 Bomber Group (Heavy) "The Liberandos ". The aircraft retains the original camouflage scheme of Olive Drab/Neutral Grey. Concerning the nose-art, there is a colour photograph of the three "drunks" which allows for a perfect copy. This aircraft was severely damaged by flak during a mission and it was left to Hptm. Steinmann of I./JG 4. to finish the job off. This Liberator was the first "true" victim of Operation Tidal Wave.



Consolidated B-24J Liberator "Ark Angel" of 853rd BS, 491st BG in 1944. As well as the nose art representing a sexy angel (anything to keep morale up!) the role of each crewmember is shown on the aircraft in the form of a green circle and a character.



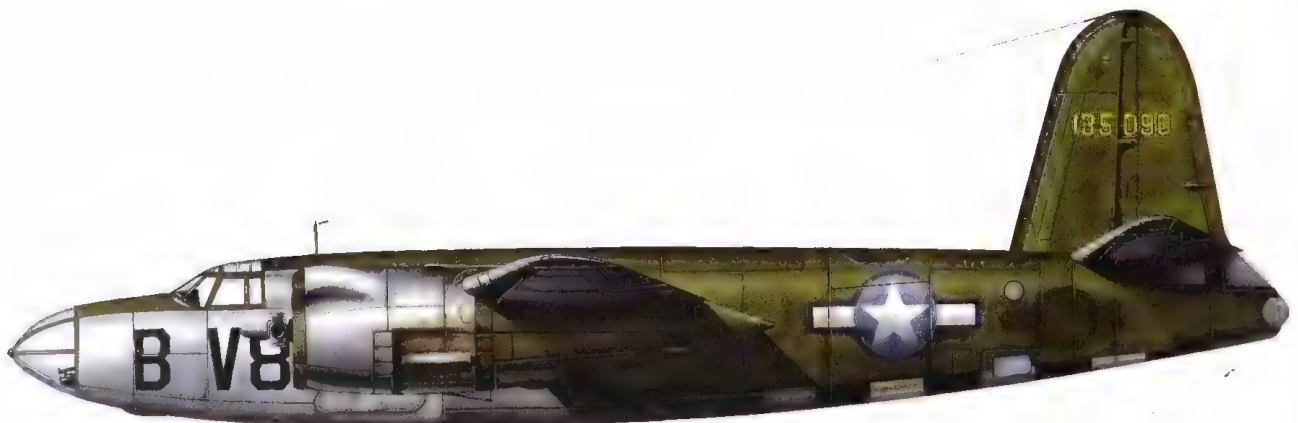
Consolidated B-24D Liberator "Teggie Ann" of 515th Bomber Squadron, 376 Bomber Group (Heavy) "The Liberandos ", a leader plane flown by Colonel Compton. The aircraft has the Sand/Neutral Grey camouflage scheme. The colours of the "Sphinx" are based on precise information concerning the Olive Drab planes of this Bomb Group.



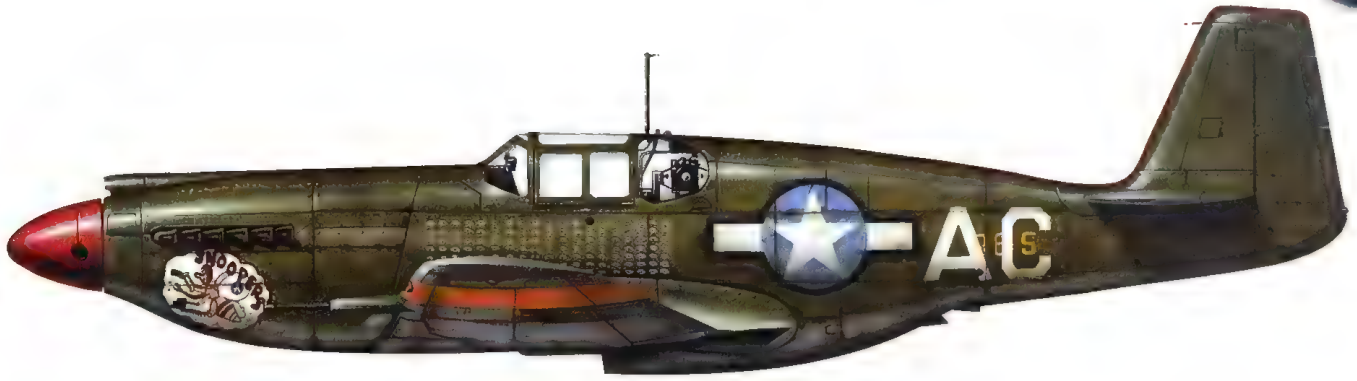
Consolidated B-24D Liberator "Joisey Bounce" of the 93rd Bombardment Group, nicknamed the "Travelling Circus", the first unit to be equipped with this four-engine bomber to cross the North Atlantic in September 1942.



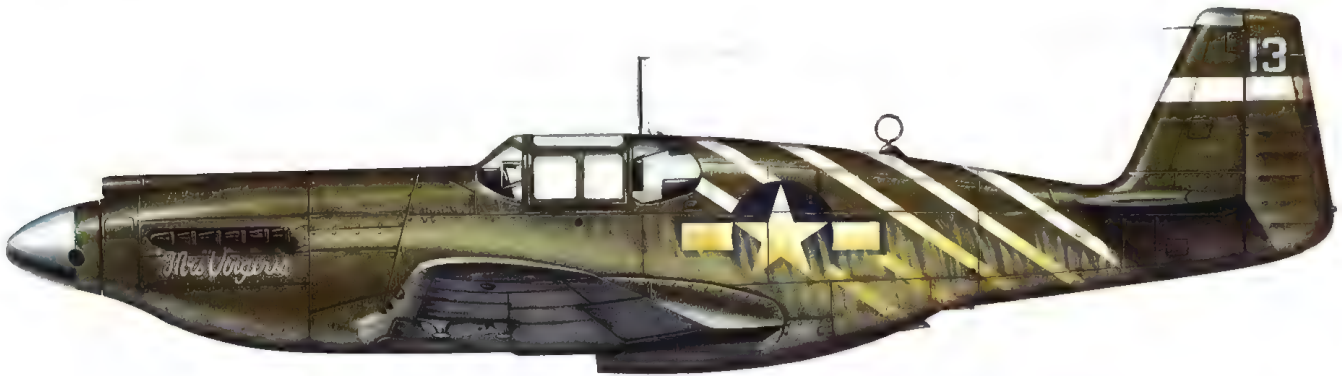
Consolidated B-24J Liberator "Turbarao". B-24J-145-co, an "assembly plane" of the 492nd Bombardment Group.



Martin B-26C-20-MO Marauder (s/n 41-35090) of the 331st AAF Base Unit, the camouflage of which, has for some parts, been left to the illustrator to decide because of the poor quality of the photo. We can note, amongst other things, the unusual camouflage scheme, no doubt due to the "cannibalisation" of several parts taken from various planes, or the original American star covered with dark paint and replaced with another, larger model, situated further forward and with a dark blue border. Light and dark surfaces visible under the belly could be D-Day stripes, but are painted in an unusual position. This aircraft, based in Barksdale, Louisiana, was stripped of its weapons and used to train French pilots.



North American P-51 (F-6A) Mustang "Snoopers". The F-6A designation was given to photographic reconnaissance Mustangs. This version has kept its warlike qualities as it is in fact a Mustang 1A (constructor designation NA-91), a version equipped with four wing-mounted 20 mm cannon and also equipped with a camera installed in the radio compartment. Only 55 aircraft were transformed into this version. Some had a bulged side window that allowed a larger camera to be fitted. This F-6A, based at Bertheaux (Algeria), belonged to the 111th TRS (Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron) of the 68th TRG (Tactical Reconnaissance Group). The numerous mission markings are all in the form of an eye! The "snooper" is a sort of wasp or bumble bee wearing a flying helmet and goggles, holding in his many legs a pair of what appear to be binoculars and a bellows-camera.



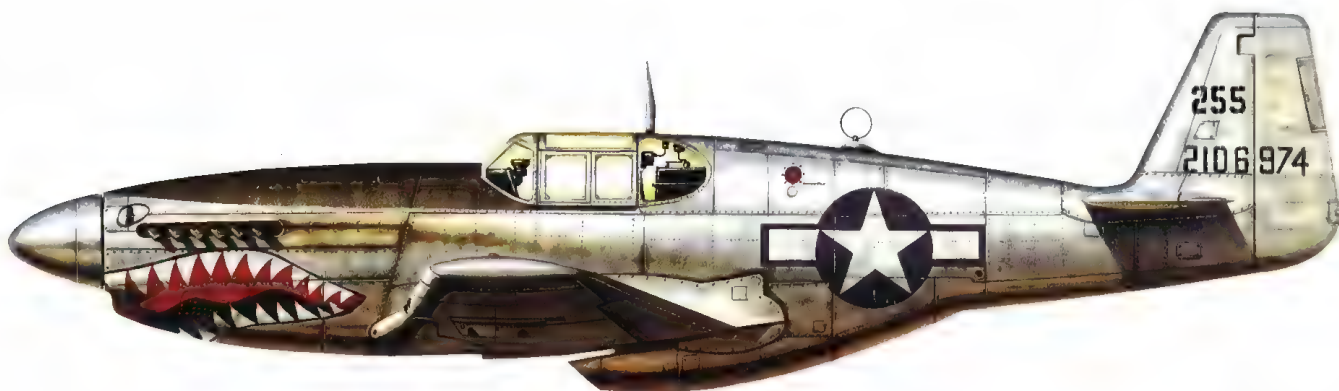
North American P-51A Mustang. "Mrs. Virginia" is a P-51A (Mustang Mk II for the British/constructor designation NA-99) similar to the Mustang I, but equipped with an Allison V-1710-81 engine and stripped of the two nose mounted calibre 50 machine-guns, only keeping, therefore, the two wing mounted machine-guns (also cal. 50). This version was also the first to carry 150 gallon drop-tanks mounted on under wing racks. Some of these aircraft were transformed for reconnaissance and then designated F-6B. The aircraft portrayed here is a P-51A of the 1st Air Commando Group and has the five diagonal white stripes that were characteristic of this unit, operating in 1944, in the difficult CBI (China, Burma, India) theatre of operations. The condition of its surfaces gives a glimpse of the harsh weather conditions in which these robust aircraft operated.



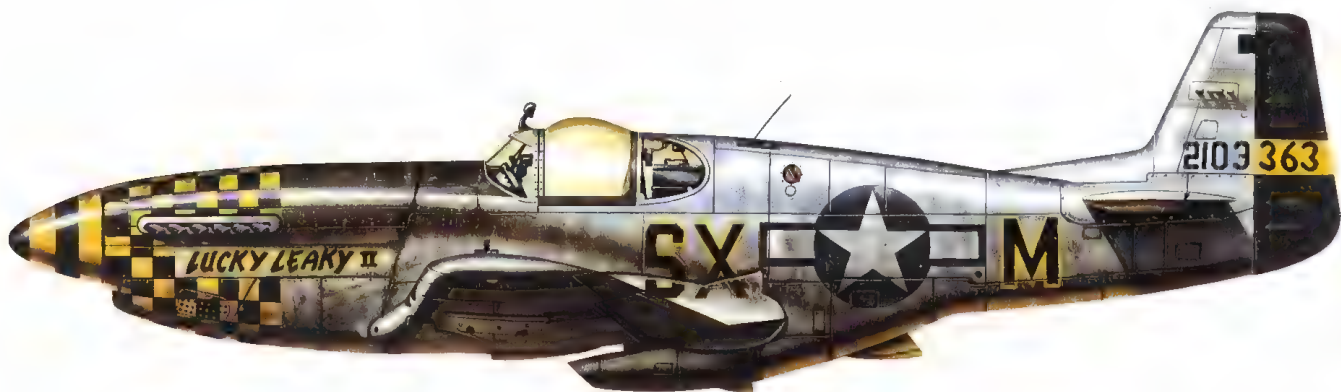
North American A-36A Apache. "Dorothy Helen" is an A-36A Apache (constructor designation NA-76), the dive-bomber version of the Mustang 1, powered this time by a more powerful Allison V-1710-87 engine, the air-intake having been fitted with a "by-pass" grille. It retains the six calibre .50 (12.7 mm) machine-guns, two of which are mounted in the nose and four in the wings. Two air brakes per wing were fitted to try and reduce the Apache's speed. Two 500 lb bomb racks were also fitted under the wings. The decoration is rather original as the national insignia is present in six places, on the fuselage, of course, but also on the upper and lower wing surfaces. Their red border, abandoned at the beginning of the autumn of 1943, is thicker than what the regulations of the day stipulated. The coloured marking above the serial number does not portray the stylised outline of the pilot's home state, but is a gas detection "patch". "Dorothy Helen" was flown by Major John Crowther of the 524th FBS (Fighter Bomber Squadron) of the 27th FBG (Fighter Bomber Group) that notably operated in North Africa in 1943.



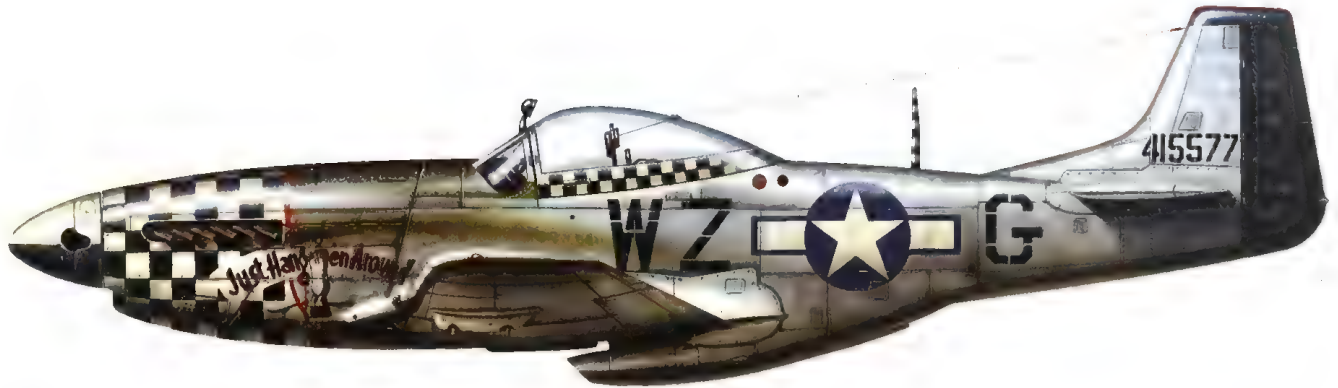
North American P-51B Mustang painted in Olive Drab and Neutral Gray and bearing all of its invasion stripes, of 352nd Fighter Group, 8th Air Force. This aircraft operated from Bodney airfield in Norfolk, Great Britain



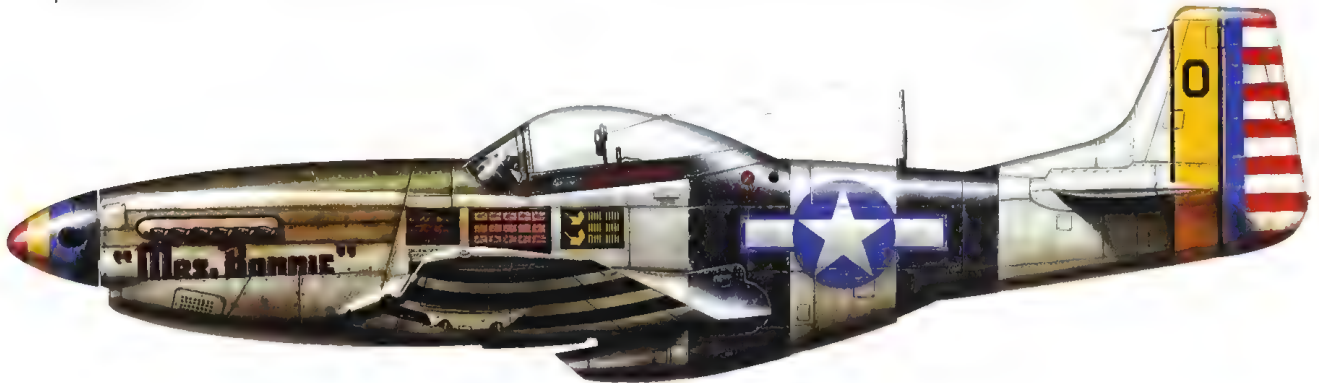
North American P-51C Mustang of 16th Fighter Squadron, 51st Fighter Group, 14th Air Force at Nanning, China towards the end of 1944. The bare metal aircraft has no distinctive markings apart from the shark mouth. This squadron was named the "Flying Wall of China Sq". The Mustangs that arrived in the 51st FG in March 1944, quickly adopted, when they started operations, the shark mouth of the AVG, as did a lot of other aircraft in the CBI (China, Burma, India) theatre of operations.



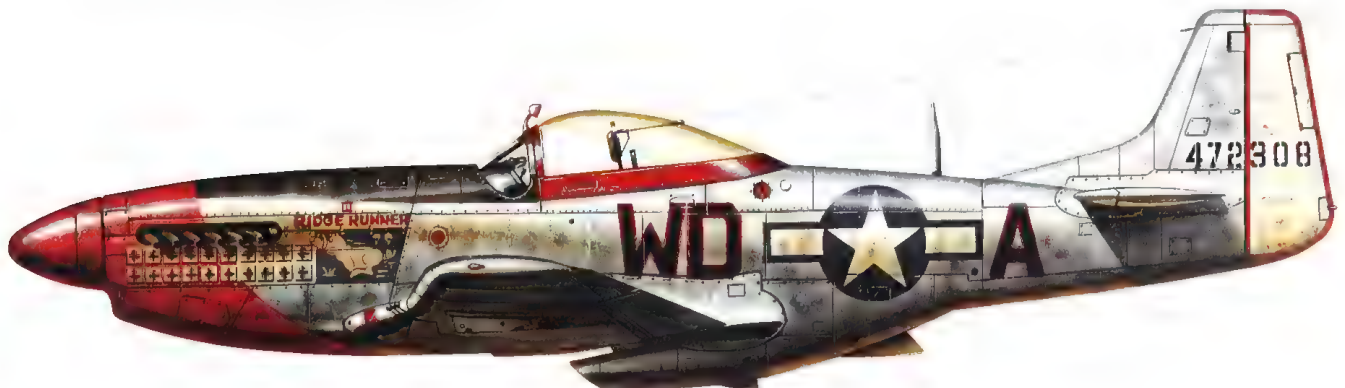
North American P-51C Mustang "Lucky Leaky II" of 352nd FS, 353rd FG, based at Raydon, England in 1945. It is interesting to note that this aircraft is equipped with a AN/APS-13 radar on the tail fin, equipment that was more often seen on the P-51D.



North American P-51D Mustang, flown by Lieutenant John Murphy, of the 84th Fighter Squadron, based at Duxford from 1945 onwards. The famous 78th Fighter Group, characterised by its planes decorated with the famous black and white chequers, is particularly well represented here with "Just Hangen Around", and its placidly perched vulture. The chequers painted on the cockpit frame and the aerial mast add an extra touch of originality and colour to this decoration, something which makes a change from the so often portrayed "Big Beautiful Doll". The chequers are separated from the fuselage by a red stripe, something that was not systematic on aircraft belonging to this Group. Finally, the rudder and half of the propeller cone are painted black.



North American P-51K-10-NT with its particularly attractive livery, was flown by Lt. Col. Bill Dunham of the 348th Fighter Group based at Okinawa in 1945. One of its particularities is its "old style" rudder decoration with its blue vertical stripe accompanied by red and white horizontal stripes. The national insignia is painted in a light blue that differs greatly from the usual Insignia Blue and the exhaust manifold is painted in a strange colour, a *fortiori* in what appears to be a pinkish shade. The aircraft bears a great many kill and mission markings comprising of Rising Sun flags, bombs, but also sunk ships. Note that the model "k" only differed from the model "D" by the presence of a different propeller made by Aeroproduct that was lighter and less bulky than the usual Hamilton that it was generally equipped with.



North American P-51D Mustang "Ridge Runner III" of 335th Fighter Squadron, 4th Fighter Group at Debden in 1945, flown by Major W. "Mac" Mc Kennon. This pilot had a reputation of being an energetic man and aggressive in combat, as testified by the tally of twenty kills and the two parachutes next to the war hog indicating that he had successfully bailed out twice from his aircraft.



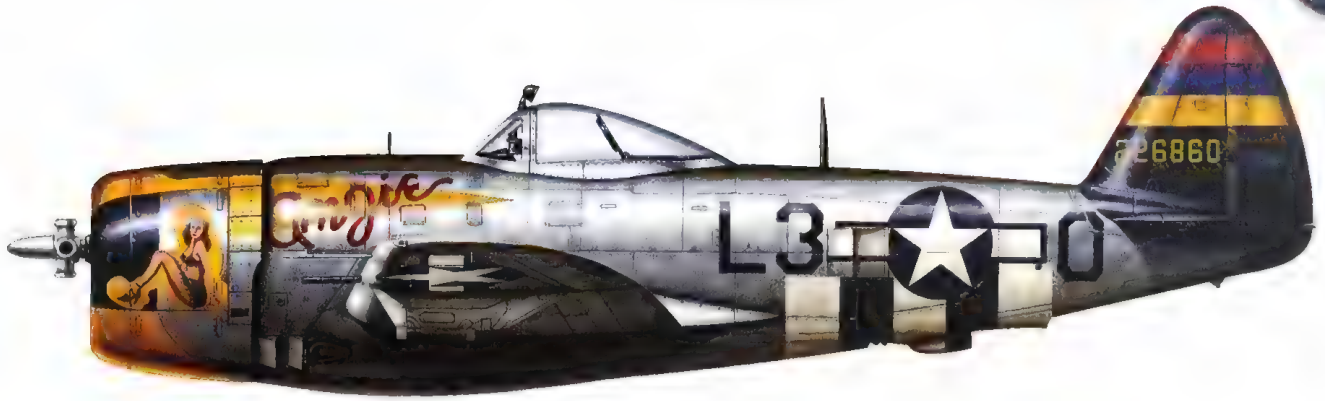
North American P-51D Mustang "Miss Mary Lou" of 343rd Fighter Squadron, 55th Fighter Group, 8th Air Force based at Wormingham, Northants in Great Britain. Flown by Robert E. Welsh, a pilot credited with six kills, this plane was painted in Medium Green for the upper surfaces with the lower wing surfaces left in bare metal. The thin coloured stripe demarcating the green of the cowlings is often shown as being yellow, however, an examination of photographs suggests a darker colour that could in fact be red.



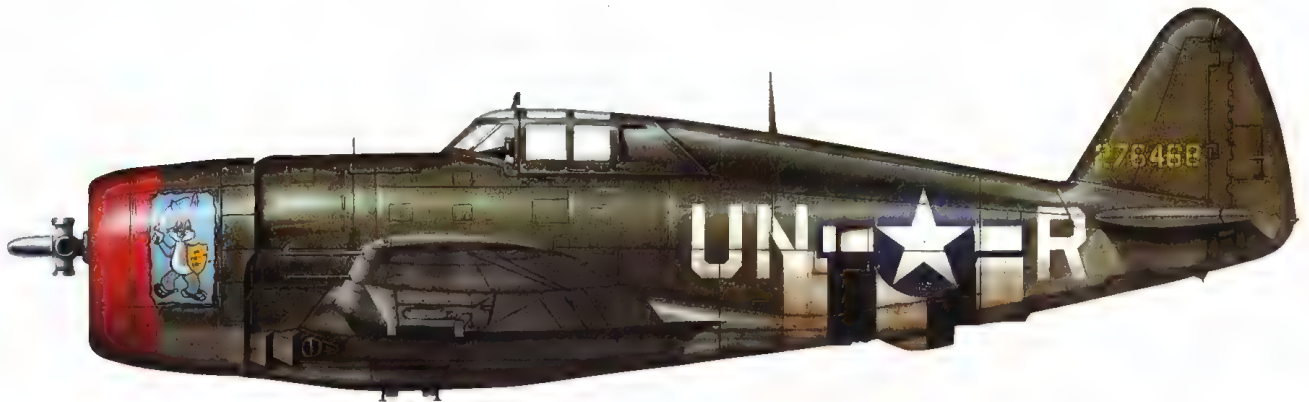
North American P-51K-10 Mustang flown by Lieutenant Colonel William Banks, commander of 348th Fighter Group (5th Air Force) at Okinawa, Japan in the summer of 1945. This pilot was credited with nine kills.



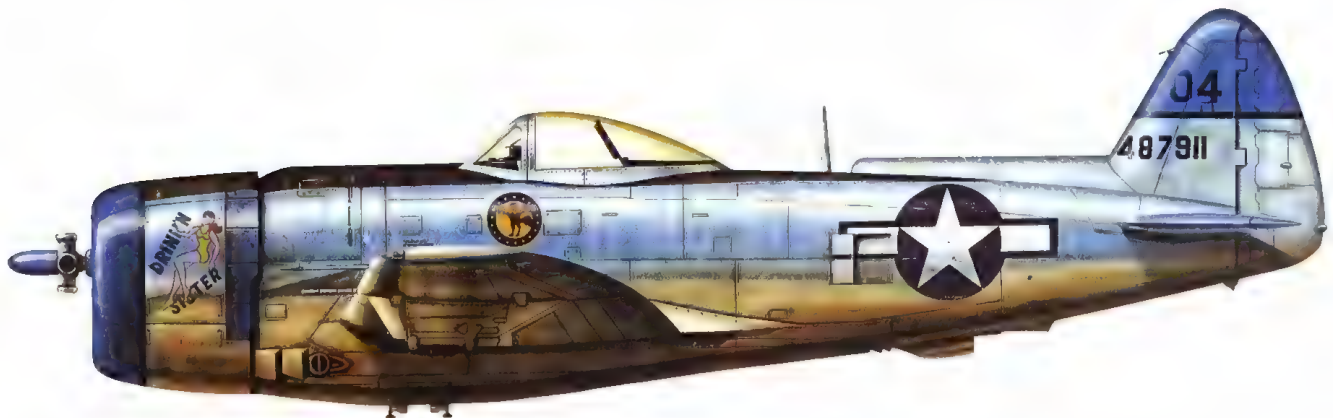
North American P-51D-15 Mustang "DoDo" belonged to the 361st FS/356th FG of the 8th Air Force based in Great Britain during the last year of the war. It was flown by the ace, Clinton D. Burdick, whose back-to-front swastika kill markings we can see on the canopy frame. The white of the "Star and Bars" has been made grey and the numbers of the fuselage code greatly narrowed, adding a touch of originality to this livery. The horizontal line over the "B" signifies that another aircraft has the same call sign. It should also be noted that the blue of the "diamonds" is lighter than that usually worn by the aircraft of this group.



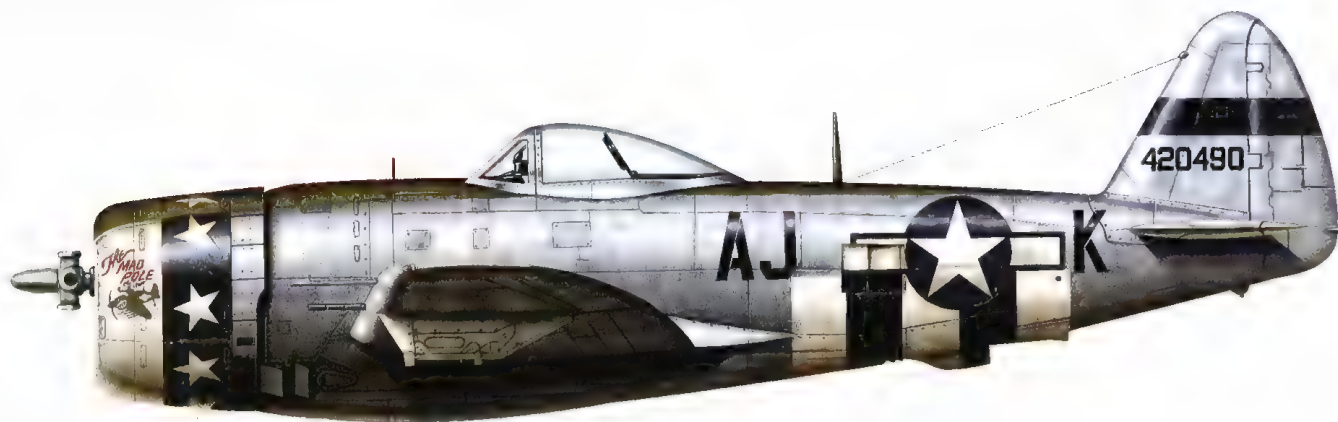
Republic P-47D-27-RE Thunderbolt "Angie", of 512th Fighter Squadron (and not the 513th FS as some sources claim...), 406th Fighter Group. It is seen here at the beginning of 1945 in Belgium. The name of the pilot who flew this plane remains unknown, as does the decoration of the right side of the aircraft. Note the presence of a section of black stripe on the nose cowl, remains of the initial decoration of the 512th FS.



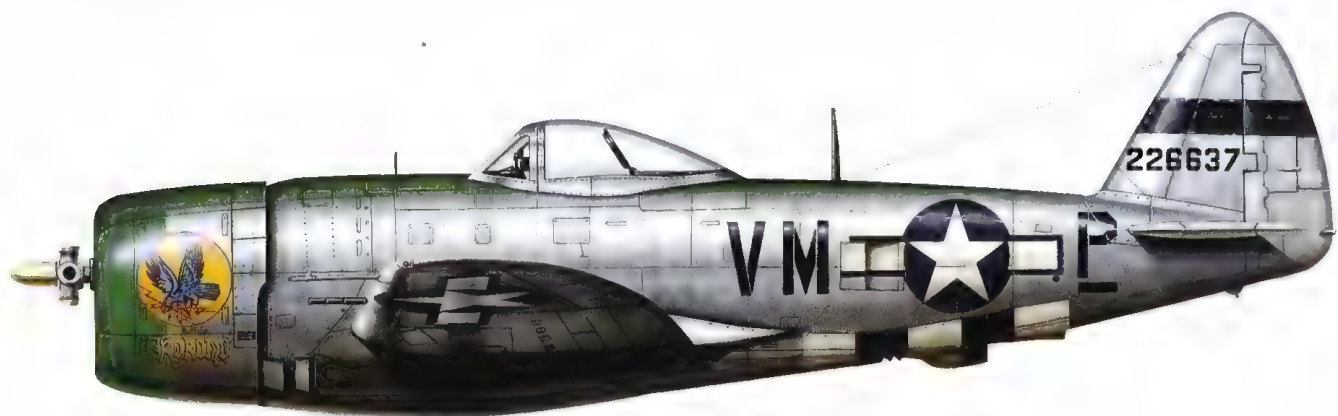
Republic P-47D Thunderbolt (Razorback) with a Curtiss Electric propeller (four bladed model) of the 63rd Fighter Squadron (56th Fighter Group, the most famous with this type of aircraft), flown by Lt. John Aranyos. It has the old camouflage scheme of Olive Drab/Neutral Gray touched up with freshly painted green (olive?) above the middle strips. The other side of the nose was painted with the map of the state of Ohio where the previously mentioned pilot probably came from.



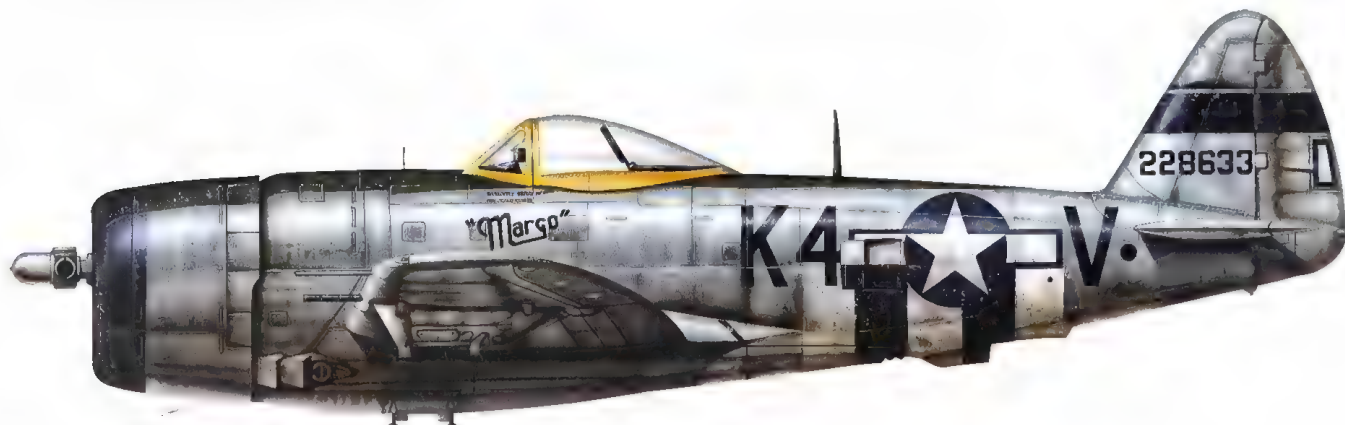
Republic P-47N-1-RE Thunderbolt of 19th Squadron, 318th Fighter Group at Ie Shima, 1945. The blue markings on the nose and tail plane characterise this squadron. The N was a long range variant with an increased wingspan and square wing tips, used only in the Pacific for escort duties. 1,816 were made.



Republic P-47D-30-RE Thunderbolt, The aircraft of Lt. Robert J. Klopotek, named "The Mad Pole", belonged to the 356th FS of the 354th FG and was based in France, at Rosières-en-Haye at the end of 1944. As for this magnificent decoration, the cowling stars and stripe that is the most often shown in Insignia Blue, is in fact, after new and reliable information, black. The colours of the nose art, unknown, are shown in the most plausible interpretation and remain, of course, unconfirmed.



Republic P-47D-25-RE Thunderbolt, flown by Major General William E. Kepner, a Great War infantry veteran who was placed in command of 8th Fighter Command in September 1943. In August the following year, Kepner was promoted to general officer commanding of the 2nd Bomb Division of the 8th Air Force before taking command of the 9th Air Force in 1945. He undertook 24 combat missions and finished the war covered with medals (Distinguished Service Cross, Purple Heart, Distinguished Flying Cross, three Legions of Merit, Distinguished Service Medal, Bronze Star Medal, Air Medal and various foreign decorations!) His aircraft has an original livery comprising of a bright green colour at the front of the cowling and covering the anti-reflection stripe that was initially in Olive Drab. The realistically painted eagle accompanies the names of "Buffalo" and "Kokomo" depending on the sides. Apparently, the wings were only equipped with three machine-guns and there were not any hardpoints. The Star and Bars are present in six places, those of the wings being of the large size.



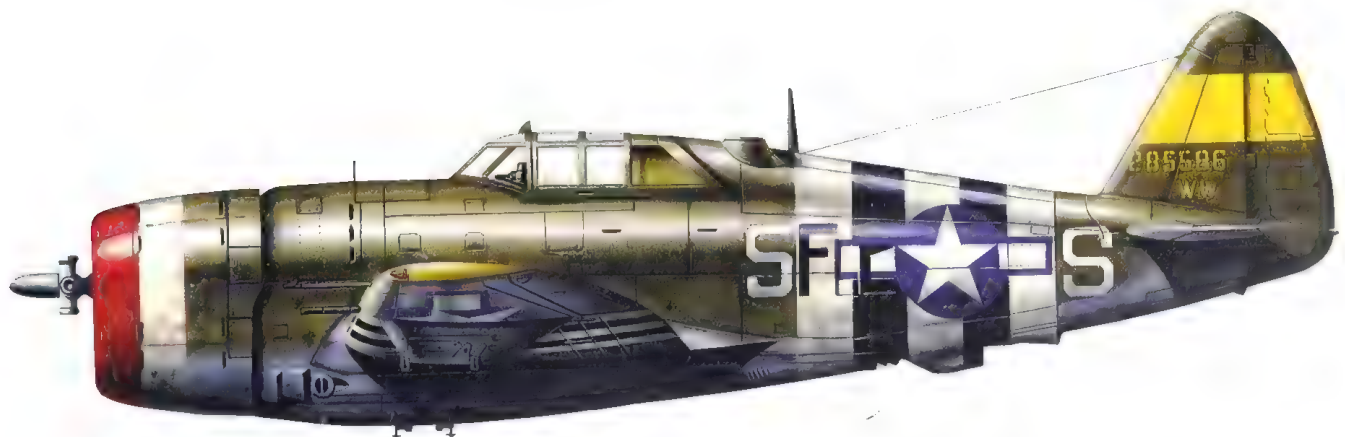
Republic P-47D Thunderbolt "Margo", of 405th Fighter Squadron (511th Fighter Group). The yellow cockpit canopy frames are distinctive to this squadron. As well as the invasion stripes, it has two black bands on the cowling and tail unit. After D-Day, this aircraft was seen at Saint-Dizier in France in 1944, still with its invasion stripes on the lower wing surfaces. The 405th Fighter Squadron ensured air cover during D-Day, then moved to a ground-attack role, causing great damage to German transport.



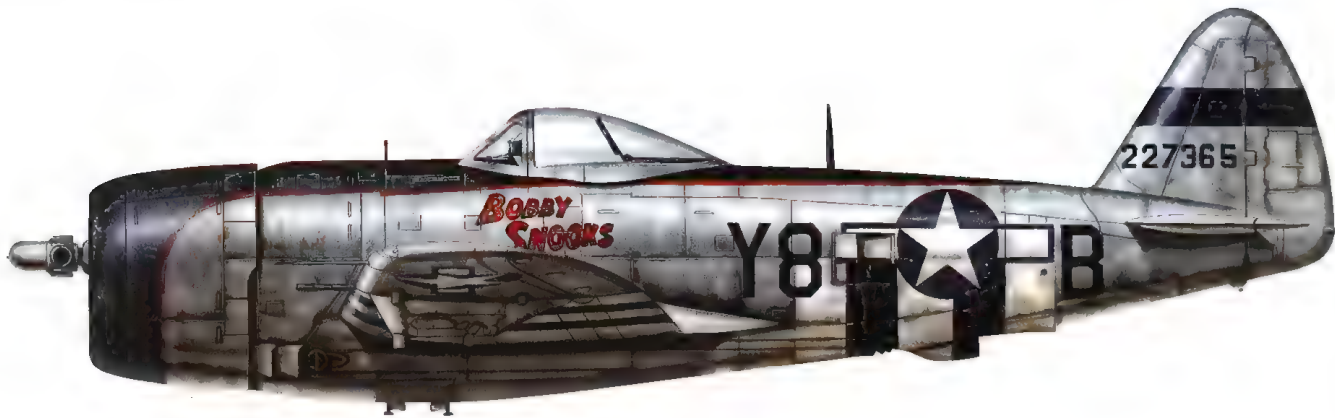
Republic P-47M Thunderbolt "Mrs. K" flown by Lt. John Keeler, 63rd Fighter Squadron, 56th Fighter Group. This unit of the 8th Air Force was the only one to use the Thunderbolt until the end of the war when this type had been replaced everywhere else by the P-51D Mustang.



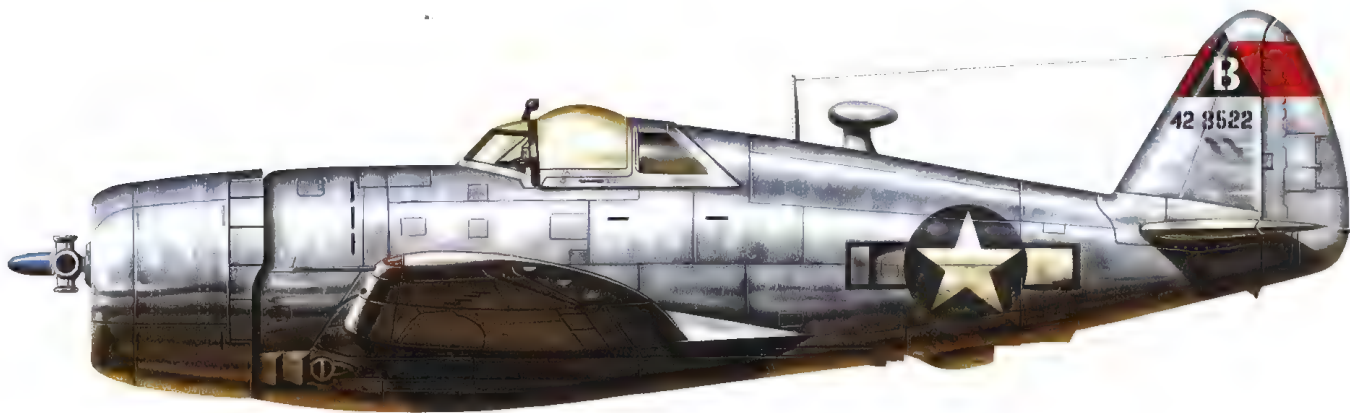
Republic P-47C Thunderbolt of an unidentified unit, Great Britain at the start of 1943. The white fuselage and tail unit stripes were to prevent any confusion with the German Fw 190.



Republic P-47D Thunderbolt of 65th Fighter Detachment B, Air Sea Rescue, Boxted (Great Britain), June 1944. These were old Thunderbolts that had been retired from active service and used to rescue pilots who had fallen into the sea. As well as their armament, they carried smoke flares and a rescue dinghy.



Republic P-47D Thunderbolt "Bobby Snooks", of the 507th Fighter Squadron (404th Fighter Group), flown by Major Galbreath. The distinctive insignia of this aircraft, apart from the black anti-reflective area underlined in red, stretches as far as the tail (and the black stripes of the tail plane), are its invasion stripes and the presence of the American roundel under the left wing, an area where it ought to be absent, something that is rare enough to be pointed out.



Republic P-47D with a rather uncommon "Malcolm Hood" canopy. The aircraft was stripped of its wartime paint, taken out of first line units and used for organising and assembling heavy bombers. Note that it is equipped with an aerodynamic dorsal fairing housing an aerial.



Supermarine Spitfire Mk VB of the 309th Fighter Squadron, 31st Fighter Group based at the High Ercall airfield in 1942.



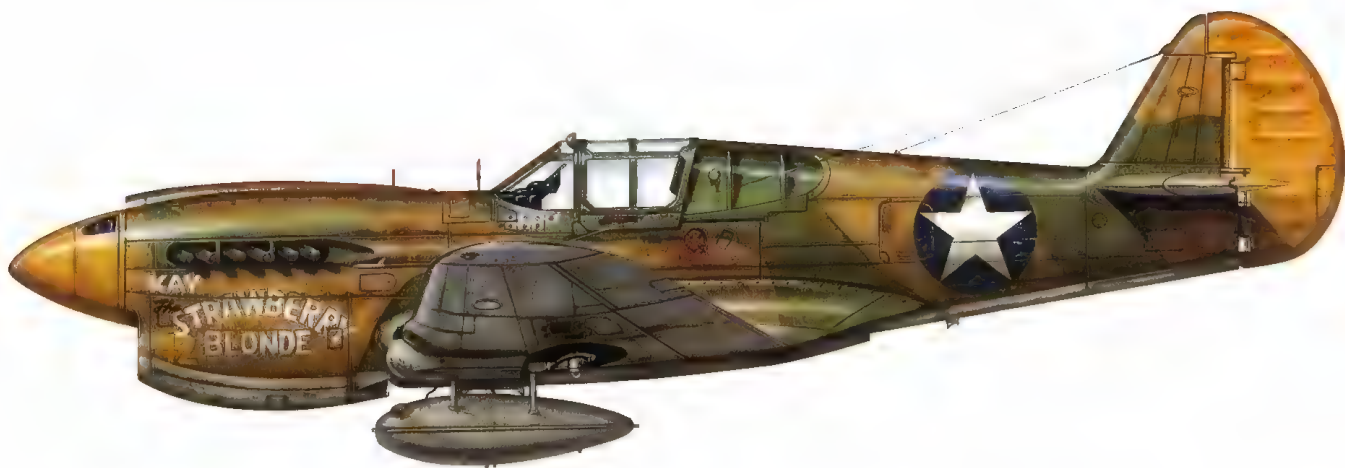
Curtiss P-40E Warhawk "Star Dust, Oklahoma Kid" of 9th Fighter Squadron, 49th Fighter Group, flown by Andrew J. Reynolds, an ace with 14.5 kills. The camouflage is very worn and has been touched up several times before being painted with this beautiful bloody clawed eagle. Note that this insignia cannot be qualified as personal as this bird of prey can be found on other Warhawks, notably decorating the aircraft of John Sauber or that of John Landers.



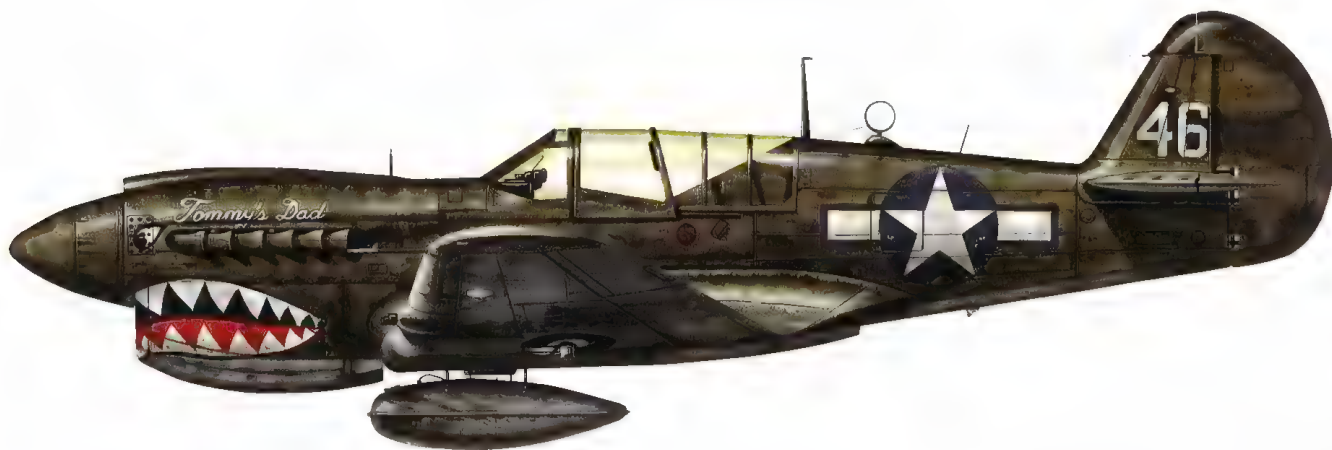
Curtiss P-40F-1 Warhawk of 314th Fighter Squadron/324th Fighter Group seen at El Kabrit, Egypt in 1943. The yellow diamond on both sides of the cowl was the distinctive insignia of the 314th Fighter Squadron. Its pilot, 2nd Lt. Mac Arthur Powers whilst leading B Flight on 18 April 1943, shot down four Ju-52 and a Bf 109 during the famous mission known as the "Palm Sunday massacre" in the newspapers at the time. During this mission, 60 Ju-52 attempting to reach Sicily were cut to pieces off Cape Bon in Tunisia by the P-40 planes of the 57th Fighter Group.



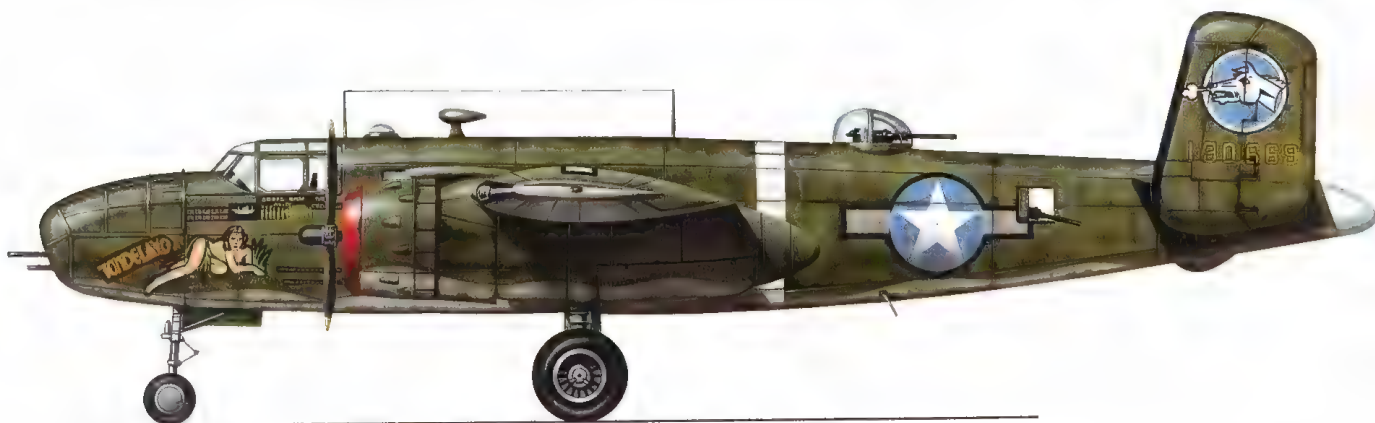
Curtiss P-40E Warhawk, was flown by Lt. Robert H. Vaught of the 49th Fighter Group. The shark mouth on a black background, the very "graphic" face and thin red stripe brighten up the austere monochrome livery. Vaught achieved three out of five bomber kills and two Zero fighters with this aircraft.



Curtiss P40-E Warhawk named "Kay the Strawberry Blonde" of the 8th Fighter Squadron, 49th Fighter Group operating in New Guinea. The plane appears to have undergone, as was often the case, many changes in its decoration. The one shown here, with its orange-yellow decoration, has been illustrated based on the accounts of its pilot. 2nd Lt. Pierce and his "Strawberry Blonde" went on to fly the P-40N, then the P-38, finishing their New Guinean adventures with a tally of seven kills.



Curtiss P-40N of 74th Fighter Squadron (23rd Fighter Group), summer 1944 at Luliang, China. At the time, this aircraft was flown by Major John C. Herbst, the unit's commander. The P-40N was the most evolved version of the Curtiss P-40 to enter into service during the war. It was much more powerful and rapid with a top speed just slightly exceeding 600 kph and it gave better visibility thanks to its redesigned canopy. It was the most common of all the P-40 in 1944. Its camouflage scheme is Olive Drab with Medium Green patches on the rudder (and probably the leading edges) and Neutral Gray.



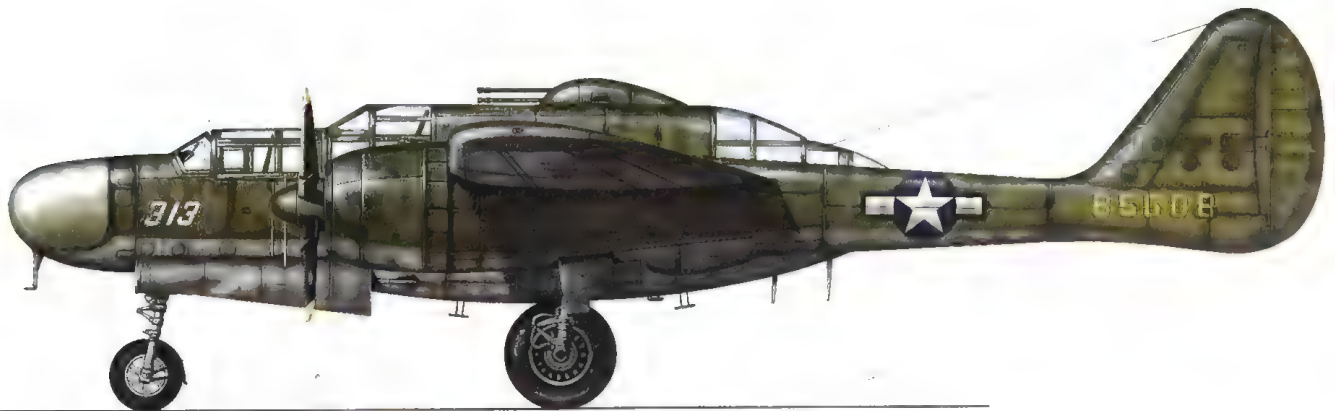
North American B-25D Mitchell "Tondelayo" of 500th BS/345th BG in June 1944. The aircraft has the usual livery of Olive Drab/Neutral Gray with many areas that have been touched up to hide the scars of combat. The Mitchell was one of the main actors of the war in the Pacific and its formidable efficiency did not prevent it paying a heavy price to Japanese defences. The aircraft portrayed here is decorated with the Vahine of Alberto Vargas that covered the entire page for June in the 1943 calendar and who inspired many USAAF "artists" with other aircraft.



Curtiss C-46 Commando of an unidentified unit. This plane's maiden flight went back to March 1940 (the civil CW-20T version) and it entered into service with the US Army Air Corps in July 1942, becoming the mainstay of American military transport between India and China for the 14th Air Force. It was more powerful, had a longer range and could carry more than the far more famous Dakota C-47. The C-46 ended its discreet career at the beginning of the Vietnam War. Along with the Curtiss P-40, it was the most produced plane by this company during the Second World War. Its camouflage scheme consists of Olive Drab and Neutral Gray and the demarcation between the colours was often clear on this type of plane.



Douglas A-26B Invader (serial 44-34486) of 10th Tactical Reconnaissance Squadron/69th Tactical Reconnaissance Group, seen here in France, in Nancy to be exact, at the beginning of 1945. The nose is armed with six cal .50 Browning machine-guns and the dorsal and belly turrets are installed. The aircraft has been left entirely in bare metal, apart from the inside part of the engine pods (not visible here) that are painted in Olive Drab. The same applies for the upper cowlings, which is in anti-reflective black. Note also the yellow wing tips.



Northrop P-61-1-NO Black Widow of 419th NFS during the summer of 1944. The aircraft has the standard camouflage scheme of Olive Drab/Neutral Gray. It had its nickname of "Black Widow" well before it adopted its sinister black livery! The 419th NFS received its first P-61 on 3 May 1944. It shot down its first Japanese aircraft in August 1944. Note part of the serial at the front painted in italics.

THE Cold War



Military aviation of the nineteen-fifties remains the poor relation of books, magazines and even model kits. Curiously, apart from a few legendary aircraft, this period does not appear to interest the majority of aviation enthusiasts.

An unloved era

Without talking about aviation in particular, but history in general, it is true that the conflicts that took place shortly after the Second World War do not provoke the same patriotic fervour and fraternity of the population nevertheless involved. The American or European civilian, part of a society that ensured a roof over one's head and a peaceful retirement, left war and all that it entailed to the professionals, and this was often accompanied by condemnation of those that fought it. It should also be mentioned that these fierce conflicts took place in far away countries and did not hinder much every day life at home.

Thus, the Korean War, a terrible conflict which nearly saw the world head towards a third world war where the use of nuclear weapons would have been inevitable, hardly bothered anyone to such an extent that it was later known as «the forgotten war».

The same applied to the Indochina war, of lesser importance, but which led to the terrible Vietnam War. And what of the few days of Operation Mousquetaire, the Franco-British-Israeli coalition against Egypt?

It was only during law and order operations in French Algeria, later known as being a real war, that the French people felt involved this time as conscripts were called up to help the professional soldiers. The lack of interest in the historical and military events of this period perhaps explain a lack of understanding and, therefore, a lack of interest in the aircraft that fought during these conflicts.

Little known aircraft


However, these years constitute, in the domain of aviation, an extremely interesting transitional period where the supremacy of piston-engine planes naturally gave way to the modern jet aircraft quite rightly considered as ushering in a new era in combat aviation. However it did not quite turn out to be the case. In this new type of warfare, where the enemy most of the time carried out a guerrilla strategy, the venerable propeller aircraft proved indispensable, even irreplaceable in their ground attack role where slower speeds at low altitude were needed.

The Korean war 122

The Indochine War 129

War in Algeria 134

Suez october 1956 136



During the Korean War, the first jet aircraft used by the Americans were the F-80 Shooting Star and the F-48 Thunderjet, fine examples, with their distinctive shape, of the beginnings of the jet era.



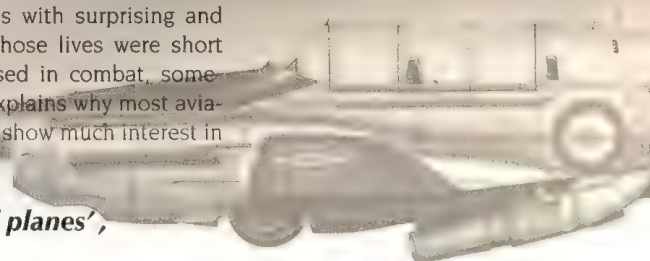
Then came the incomparable F-86 Sabre with its swept-back wing that most aviation enthusiasts consider as being one of the most beautiful fighters to have ever been built. From a purely artistic point of view, the nineteen-fifties represent a real godsend for an illustrator. It is an opportunity to illustrate the last generation of «piston» aircraft, to try and give volume to their very often monochrome and dark blue liveries, and to face the complicated challenge of rendering the metallic surfaces of the first jets. In all cases, each of these planes, and there are many, are of particular interest and rightly so as this transitional period resulted in aircraft that are incomparable in shape.

French aircraft during the tragic Indochina and Algerian conflicts were American-made and with their standard roundels or navy anchors, also had a great look. Later, still with

the Americans, the designers came up with the Banshee, Fury, Demon, Skyray, and not forgetting the Cutlass, planes with surprising and unusual shapes, but whose lives were short and which were not used in combat, something which no doubt explains why most aviation enthusiasts do not show much interest in them.

The last 'beautiful planes', the first jets

From a strictly personal point of view, I consider that the construction of beautiful aircraft ended at the beginning of the jet era, with the exception of the later Mirage III and IV, the American «centuries» series and the Phantom II. Modern planes of course have their interesting aspects, but I find that their appearance lacks any remarkable characteristics and, above all, that their shape differs little from one plane to another. It should also be said that the adoption of low visibility camouflage schemes, totally dreary, does not exactly inspire the illustrator.

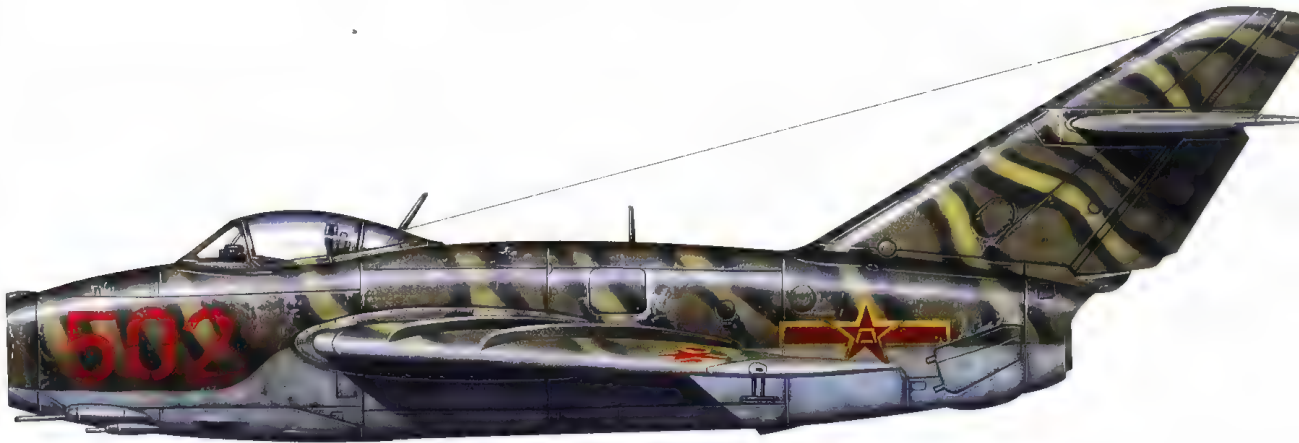




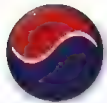
NORTH KOREA



Lavotchkine La-9 "Fritz" of the North Korean Air Force. Along with its successor, the La-11, the last propeller driven fighter made by this manufacturer, this type of aircraft, delivered by China to North Korea, was mostly used in a ground attack role.



Mikoyan Gourevitch MiG-15bis flown by Captain Nicolai Ivanov, 726. IAP, 133. IAD in 1953, a pilot with 8 kills. On 1 November 1950, when the allied pilots first came up against this type of fighter, they were taken aback by their superior performance compared to United-Nations planes. Russian pilots took part in the conflict flying planes with North Korean roundels or, as here, Chinese colours, shooting down numerous planes.



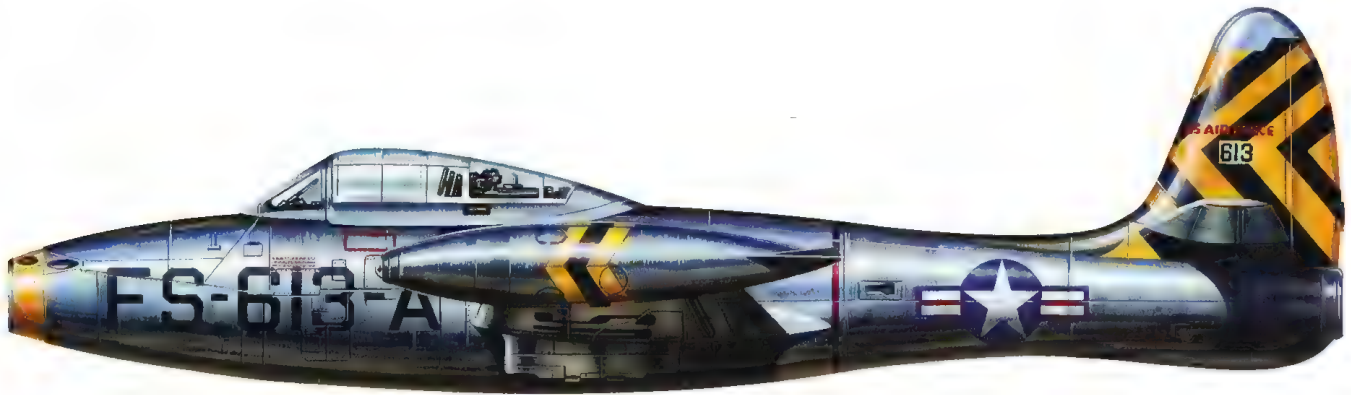
SOUTH KOREA



North American F-51D Mustang of the Republic Of Korea Air Force (ROKAF). Despite the reservations of the United States, a Mustang squadron with some American pilots was sent to help the South Koreans in the summer of 1950 as part of the "Bout One Project". These aircraft came directly from USAF stocks with their national marking hastily repainted. They were used for support missions for the men on the ground as well as in an interdiction role.



Lockheed F-80C Shooting Star "Saggin' Dragon" of the 16th Fighter Interceptor Squadron, 51st Fighter Interceptor Wing, based at Suwon (Korea) in 1950. Outclassed by the MiG-15, the Shooting Star revealed itself to be a formidable aircraft throughout the conflict in its new role of fighter-bomber.



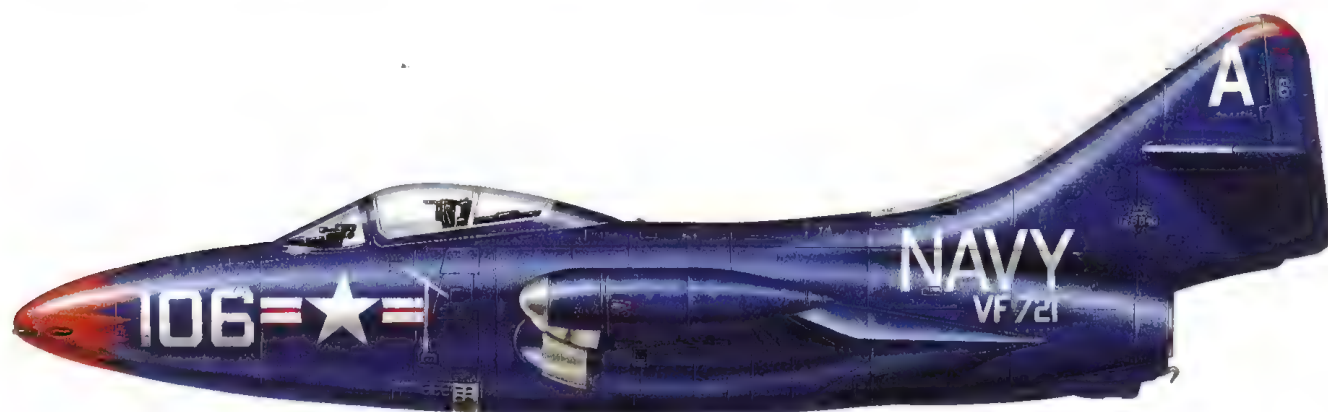
Republic F-84G Thunderjet "Frenchie/Lois K" of 8th Fighter Bomber Squadron in 1953. Originally designed as a pure fighter, the Thunderjet, nicknamed Hog or "Flying Coca-Cola bottle" because of the shape of its fuselage, was rapidly confined to a ground attack role upon the arrival of the Communist jets.



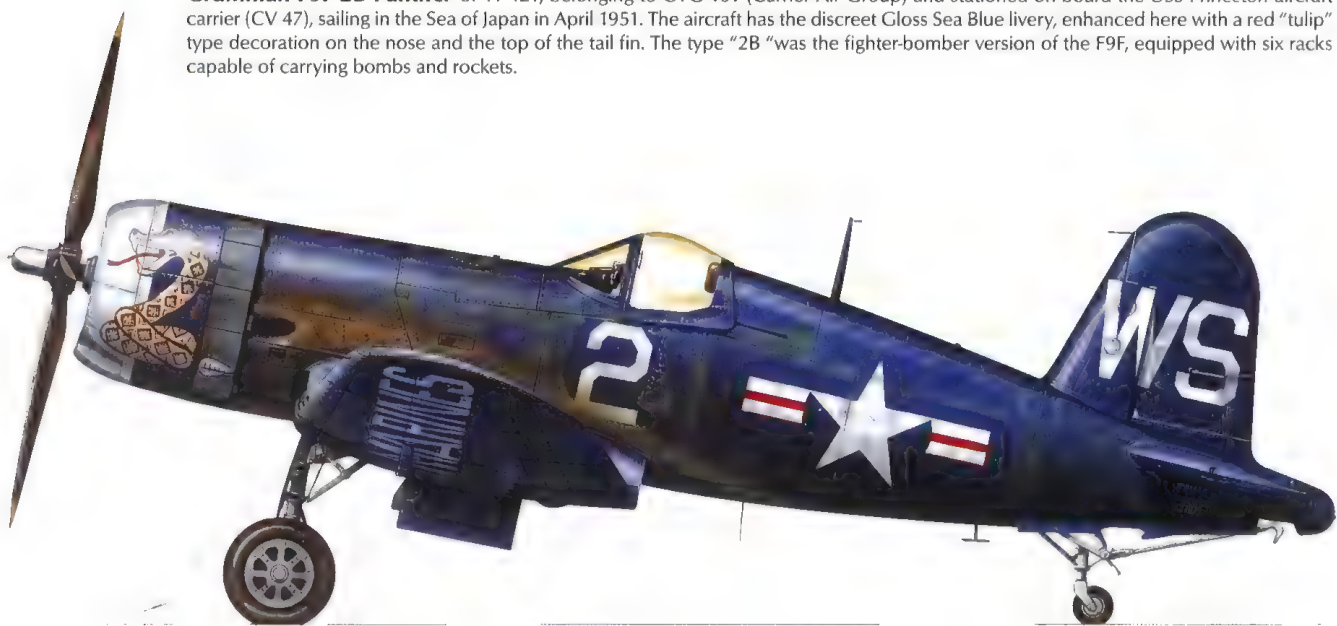
Douglas B-26B Invader belonging to 37th Bomber Squadron, 17th Bomber Group (Light), seen here at Pusan (Korea) at the end of 1952. The aircraft, painted entirely in gloss black (colour applied for future night time missions), has been given red touches on the engine cowlings, wing tips, tail unit and top of the tail fin, except for the rudder. During this conflict, many Invaders bore elaborate nose art. The plane portrayed here bears a nice pin-up named "Sweet Miss Lillian" taken from the Esquire calendar of 1952.



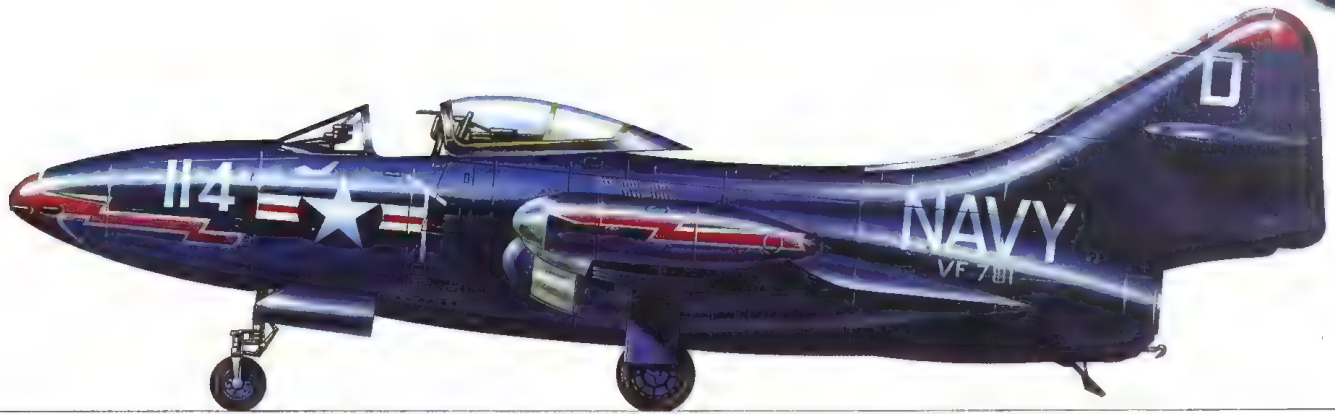
Douglas F3D-2 Skyknight of VMF (N)-513 "Flying Nightmares". Flying this plane, Major William Statton scored the first kill by a jet aircraft at night on 2 November 1952 when he shot down a Yak-15. This twin-seater twin jet engine aircraft scored the most kills with the US Navy Air Force in Korea.



Grumman F9F-2B Panther of VF-121, belonging to CVG 101 (Carrier Air Group) and stationed on board the *USS Princeton* aircraft carrier (CV 47), sailing in the Sea of Japan in April 1951. The aircraft has the discreet Gloss Sea Blue livery, enhanced here with a red "tulip" type decoration on the nose and the top of the tail fin. The type "2B" was the fighter-bomber version of the F9F, equipped with six racks capable of carrying bombs and rockets.



Vought F4U-4 Corsair of Marine Fighter Squadron (VMF) 323 "Death Rattlers" based on the *USS Sicily* in September 1950. The VMF-323 was based on land at the K-14 airfield (Kimpo, Korea), beginning on 17 September 1950.



Grumman F9F-2 Panther of VF-781, based on the aircraft carrier *USS Bonhomme Richard*. The Panther, along with the Sabre, was without doubt the most symbolic American aircraft of the war. The fuselage of this aircraft bears the markings of the 25 flown by Lieutenant (Junior Grade) Middleton, as well as a MiG-15 kill whose outline has been painted under the windshield.



Grumman F9F-5 Panther of VF-153, based on the aircraft carrier *USS Princeton* during the year of 1953. The curious livery of this Panther, nicknamed "The Blue Tail Fly", comes from the fact that this aircraft was the result of a hybrid of two damaged aircraft. The re-usable elements of the two airframes, aluminium for one and Gloss Sea Blue for the other, were assembled, and this plane undertook many missions in this livery before being sent to the paint workshop to receive a more usual, but less interesting livery. Le F9F-5 was the most powerful version of the F9F-4, mainly characterised by a longer fuselage and a higher tail fin.



North American F-82G Twin Mustang "Midnight Sinner" of the 4th Fighter (All Weather) Squadron. The curious Twin Mustang was, at the beginning of the war, the only USAF aircraft capable of undertaking missions in Korea from bases situated in Japan. Its great range allowed it to carry out these flights from Japan where the American air forces were stationed. Later, the F-82 served as night fighters.



Vought F4U-5N Corsair of Detachment "Dog", VC-3, flown by Lieutenant Guy "Lucky Pierre" Bordelon. *USS Princeton*, 1953. This pilot accumulated records in Korea. He was the only Navy night fighter ace who did not fly a jet. He scored his fifth kill in July 1953 when he shot down a North-Korean La-11. The white markings are covered with a blue wash to render them less visible.



Vought AU-1 Corsair of VMA-212 "Lancers". Suwon (Korea), 1953. The squadron's nickname is reflected in the painted lance on the fuselage.



F4U-5N Vought Corsair of VMF (N)-513 "Flying Nightmares", based at the K-13 airfield (Kimpo, Korea) in the summer of 1951. This unit, which operated alongside the Grumman F7F-3N Tigercat before being equipped with the Douglas Skyknight, had twelve pilots who had scored at least one kill. Originally tasked with the nocturnal protection of the Kimpo based F-80 and F-86 aircraft, these Corsairs were painted matt black to render them less visible to searchlights. They also undertook low altitude harassment missions on supply roads coming out of Manchuria.



Vought F4U-5 Corsair of VF-14 "Tophatters", based on USS Franklin D. Roosevelt with the VI Fleet as it cruised through the Mediterranean in August 1953.



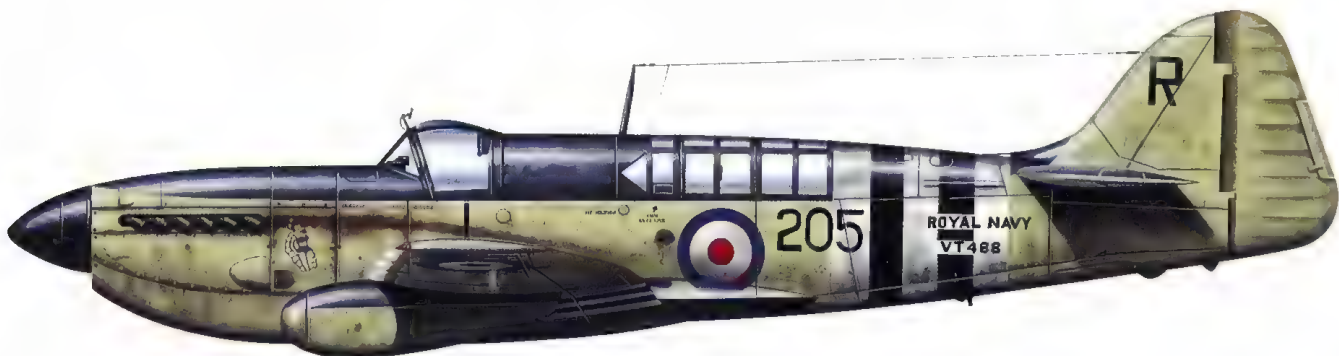
North American F-86 E-5 of the 336th FIS, 4th Fighter Wing, 1952 at the Kimpo airfield. Having survived numerous missions at the hands of various pilots, "Eight Ball Express/Pretty Mary" ended its Korean adventures with Captain Clay O Keen. This pilot was veteran of the Second World War, during which he flew a P-38 Lightning in Burma.



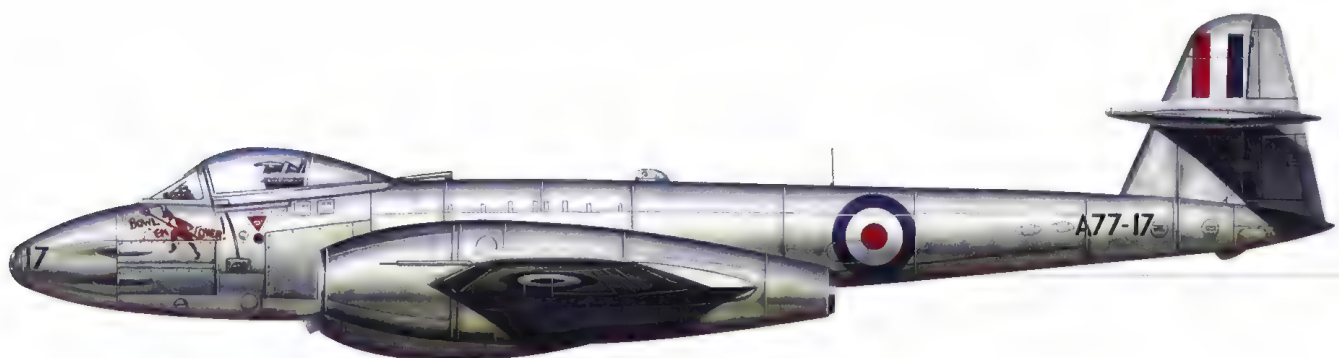
North American F-86F-1 of the 39th FS, 51st FG flown by 2nd Lt James L. Thompson, seen here at the Suwon airfield in 1953. Nicknamed "The Huff", this plane has a very elaborate livery with a dragon inspired by Asian legends. This pilot shot down two MiG-15, one of which bore a dragon on its fuselage. It would appear that following this kill, a mechanic painted this flamboyant decoration on the Sabre.



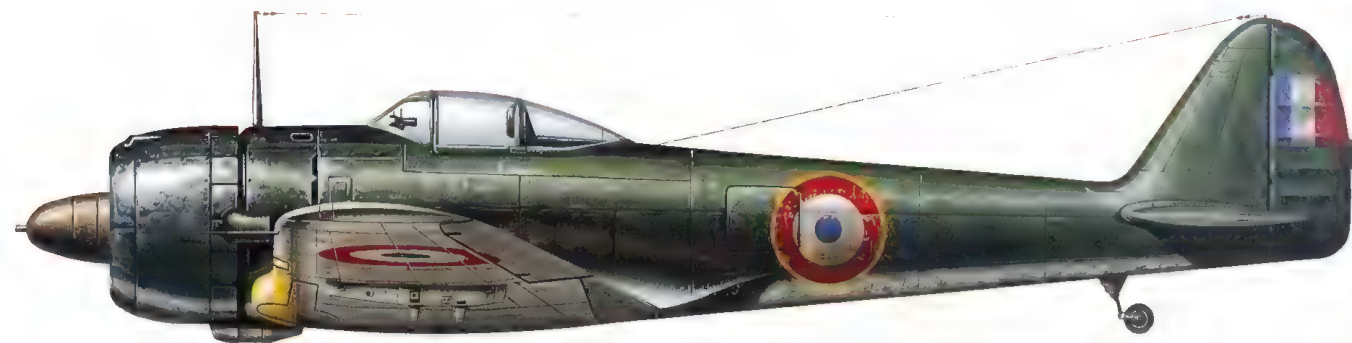
Hawker Sea Fury FB Mk 11 of No 802 Squadron, based on the aircraft carrier *HMS Ocean*. Whilst flying this plane on 9 August 1952, Lieutenant Peter "Hoagy" Carmichael shot down a Korean MiG-15, thus becoming the only British pilot of this conflict to achieve a kill with a British aircraft.



Fairey Firefly FR Mk 5 of No 821 Squadron, 14th Carrier Air Group on board *HMS Glory* in March 1953. Flown by Lieutenant J.-F. K. Mc Grail, who flew more than 110 operational sorties in Korea, this aircraft bears the standard Fleet Air Arm camouflage of Extra Dark Sea Grey and Sky. Personal insignia and pin-ups were rare within the Fleet Air Arm.



Gloster Meteor F Mk 8 of No 77 Squadron, Royal Australian Air Force, flown by Flying Officer Bruce Gogerly. Although outclassed by the more rapid and agile Korean MiG-15, the Australian Meteors still managed to shoot down three of these Soviet made fighters.



Nakajima Ki-43-II Hayabusa "Oscar" of Groupe de Chasse (GC) I/7, spring 1946. These Japanese fighters were taken by the French at the end of the Second World War and used for a short time before the arrival of British Spitfires in Indochina.



Douglas C-47, of Groupe de Transport (GT) 2/63 "Sénégal", based at Nam Dinh in the summer of 1954. The aircraft's bare surfaces have received, on a large part of the sides and the entire underneath, a randomly applied, spray-painted matt black. However, the matt aspect is no doubt due to weather conditions, with the paint being originally shiny. The tactical code on the tail fin is green, a colour also used on the aircraft's nose, which also bears an emblem portraying a native's head and the word, "Sénégal".



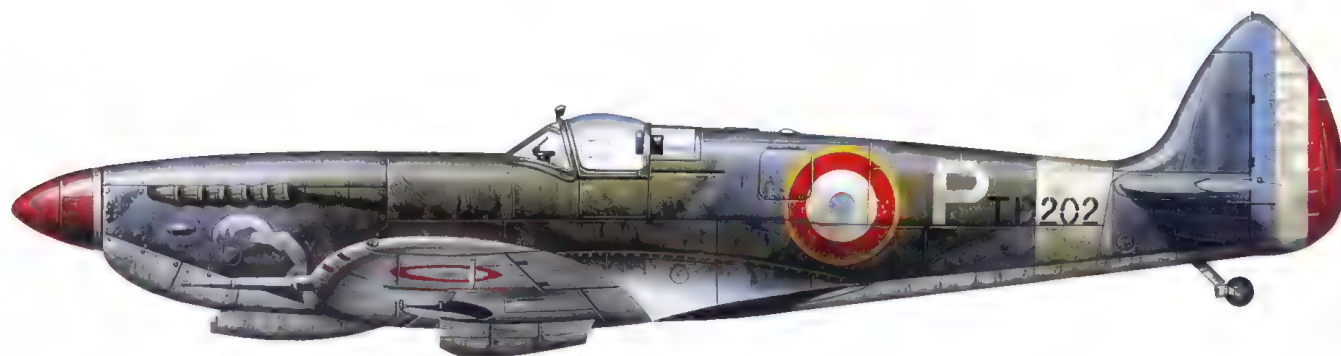
Douglas B-26 Invader of Groupe de Bombardement (GB) 2/91 "Guyenne", Oran. The Invader would be used for bombing, strafing and dropping flares, as well as guiding the EALA (Escadrilles d'aviation légère d'appui / light support aircraft squadrons), along with the RB-26.



Fairchild C-119C Flying Boxcar, lent by the United States and used by the French Armée de l'Air in its struggle against the Viet-Minh. The aircraft has retained its vermillion facings, which are more orangey than the red of the French colours. The French roundels have been painted over the American nationality markings. On the other hand, the pin-up and the words "Troop Carrier" have been retained. During the siege of Diên Biên Phu, the C-119 were flown and maintained by French crews, with others being flown by the "civilian" pilots of the CAT (Civil Air Transport), an airline created in 1946 by a certain Claire Lee Chennault.



Grumman F6F-5 Hellcat of Flottille 11F of the Aéronavale Française, based at Cat Baï in April 1954.



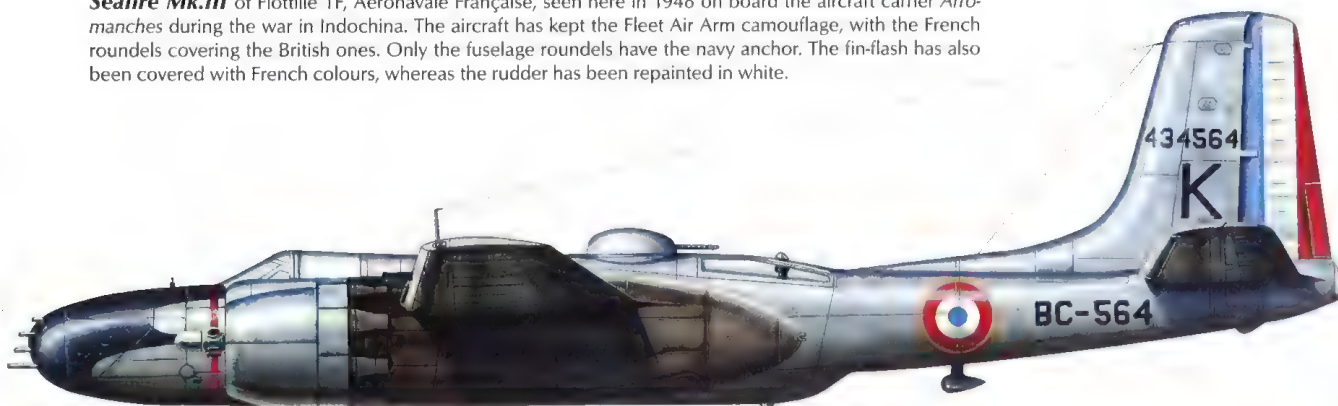
Supermarine Spitfire Mk IX of the GC I/4 "Dauphiné" based at Tourane in 1948. The lack of an aerial mast on the aircraft's back was no doubt caused when the aircraft "flipped-over" in February 1948.



Curtiss SB2C-5 Helldiver of Flottille 3F, based at Bach Mai during the Battle of Dien Bien Phu, in 1954.



Seafire Mk.III of Flottille 1F, Aéronavale Française, seen here in 1948 on board the aircraft carrier *Arromanches* during the war in Indochina. The aircraft has kept the Fleet Air Arm camouflage, with the French roundels covering the British ones. Only the fuselage roundels have the navy anchor. The fin-flash has also been covered with French colours, whereas the rudder has been repainted in white.



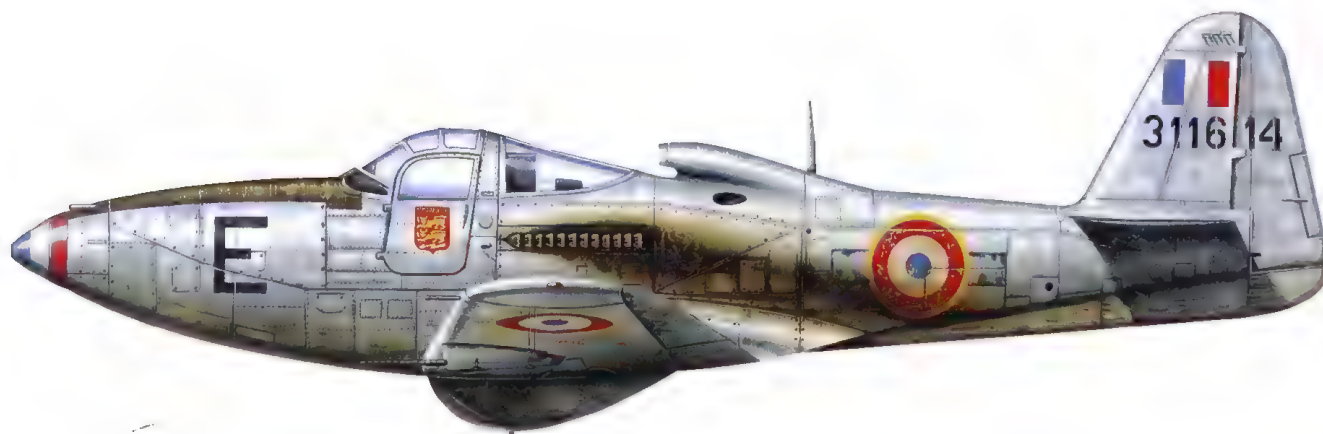
Douglas B-26B of Groupe de Bombardement (GB) 1/19 "Gascogne", seen here in Indochina, 1953. Having come from Korea, these aircraft were refitted in Japan. The plane is in bare metal, apart from the nose, which has received black facings. Note that the lower wing surfaces do not have roundels. The belly turret has been replaced by a fuel tank. The fairing aerial has been moved under the fuselage to make it work more efficiently. The nose has eight machine-guns and each wing carries three weapons of the same calibre. This plane, along with the other B-26 aircraft, was handed back to the Americans at the end of the Indochina conflict.



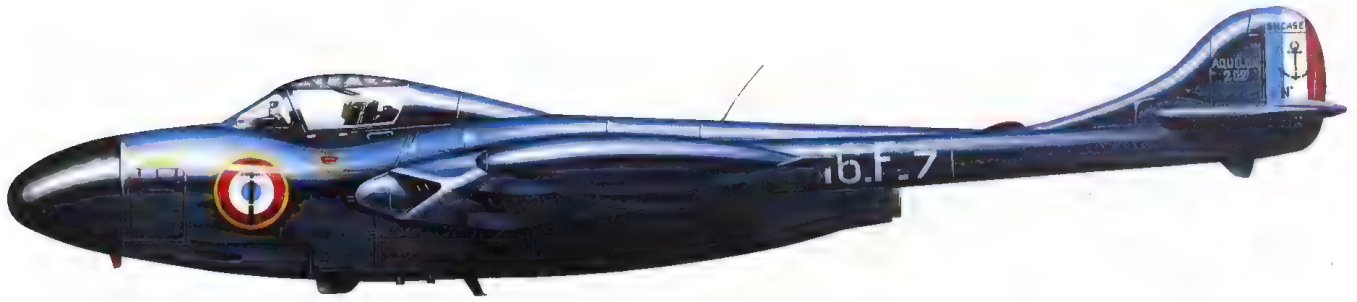
Grumman F8F-1 Bearcat of Groupe de Chasse (GC) 2/9 "Auvergne", seen here at Tan Son Nhut in 1953. This particularly powerful looking aircraft is without any doubt, the most representative aircraft of this war. The prototype first flew in August 1944, but went into production too late to take part in the fighting of the Second World War. Sadly, it was already deemed as being obsolete to take part in the Korean War. It was, therefore, in French colours that this formidable aircraft was able to prove its worth as a "strafer" and bomber, perfectly suited to the conditions.



Grumman F8F-1 Bearcat of Groupe de Chasse (GC) 2/9 "Auvergne". Bien Hoa, 1952.



Bell P-63C Kingcobra of Groupe de Chasse (GC) 2/6 "Normandie-Niemen", January 1950. The Kingcobra was the first American fighter to be used by the French in Indochina. Fifty of these planes equipped four fighter squadrons starting in July 1949.



SNCASE Aquilon 202 of Flottille 16 F, Alger-Maison Blanche, autumn 1956. Extrapolated from the British De Havilland Sea Venom and later built under licence in France from British pre-made parts, this first carrier-borne Aéronavale jet (the maiden flight of which took place in October 1952, at Marignane) has a new cockpit canopy, strengthened undercarriage and SNCASO ejector seats.



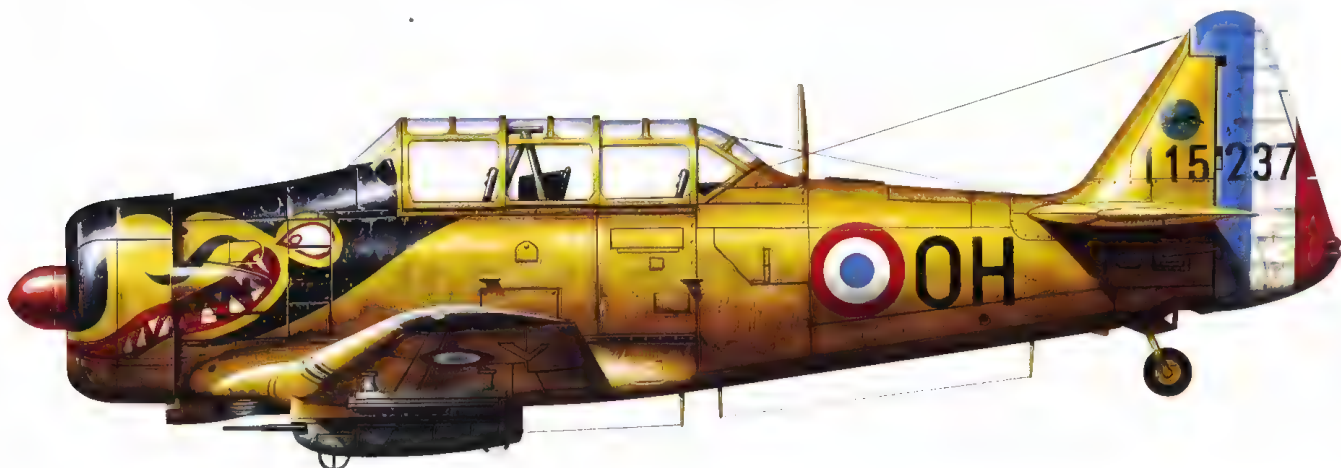
Vought F4U-7 Corsair (17.F.15) of Flottille 17 F, at Telergma (Algeria) in 1961. The predator in the insignia is now on a red background and the propeller hub cover is also red. Curiously, the predator of the left hand side insignia is facing the right, contrary to what is usual.



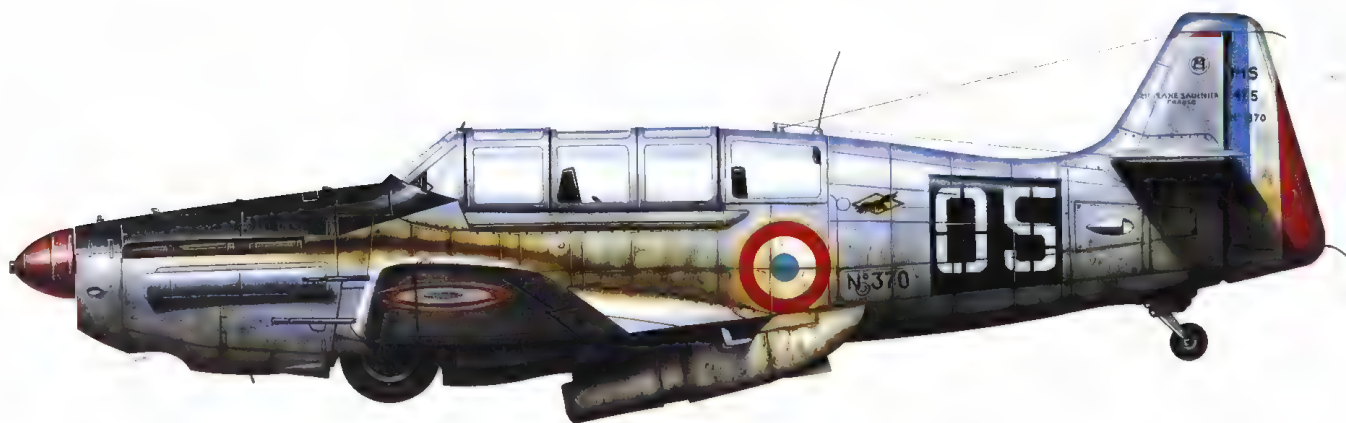
Sikorsky H-34 (S.55) based at Telergma in 1958. This helicopter was used by the French Army at the outset of the troubles in Algeria and arrived in France at the beginning of 1957. It went into production under licence with Sud Aviation two years later. Its Aéronavale career ended at the end of the 1980s with the arrival of the Lynx.



SIPA S.12 of the EALA (Escadrille d'aviation légère d'appui) 3/71, based at Djelfa in 1956. This plane derived from the German Arado 96, a training aircraft built under licence in France and Czechoslovakia after the Second World War. In Algeria, the SIPA was used for reconnaissance and light infantry ground support.



North American T-6G Texan of EALA (Escadrille d'aviation légère d'appui) 5/72, based at Colomb-Béchar in 1957. The emblematic aircraft of the Algerian War, this plane was originally designed for training, but was much used by the French for ground attack missions, foreshadowing the future "anti-insurrection" aircraft such as the Bronco. This aircraft bears here, a decor, which is well known, but particularly impressive.



Morane Saulnier 474 Vanneau of the CERO (Centre d'entraînement des Réserves ordinaires) 305 at Alger-Maison Blanche. The Aéronavale was not satisfied with this deck landing capabilities of this aircraft and it was rapidly sent to liaison units.



North American/Sud Aviation T-28 Fennec n° 66 of the EALA (Escadrille d'aviation légère d'appui) 03/005. The Petit Prince insignia was previously used by the former 09/72. Transformed by Sud-Aviation into a two-seater fire support aircraft from an American Trojan, the Fennec gradually replaced the T-6 starting in August 1960. This plane was better than the T-6 in difficult mountainous operations thanks to its 1,425 hp engine, and one hundred were engaged in the final months of the conflict.



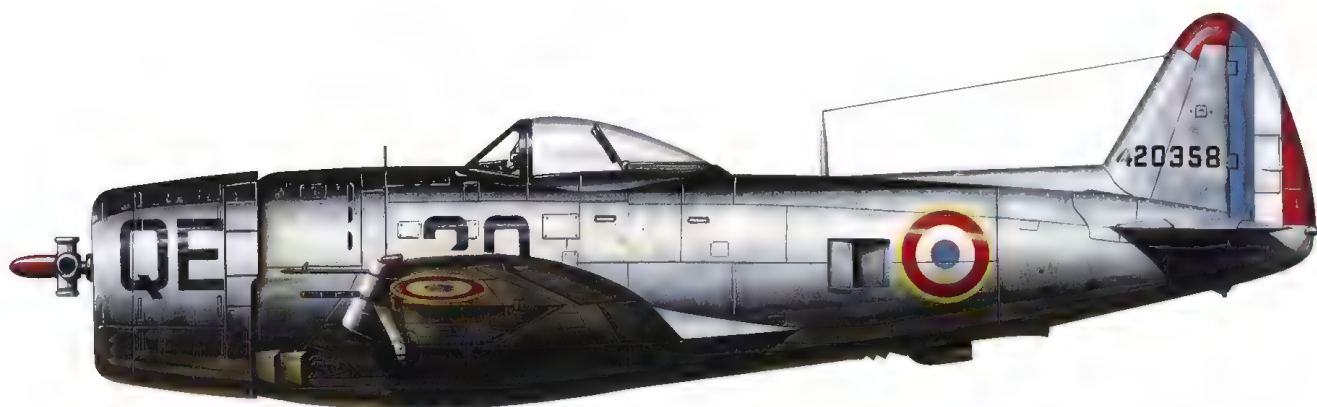
Douglas AD-4N Skyraider (Bu No 126901) of Escadron de Chasse (EC) 2/20 "Ouarsénis", based on alert at Biskra in November 1960. This unit's Skyraiders had yellow markings at the top of their tail fins, wingtips and undercarriage bosses. The individual letter S is also painted in black at the top of the tail fin. The Skyraider was highly manoeuvrable at low altitude and its firepower (4 x 20 mm cannons, 12 HVAR rockets, napalm pods and bombs), toughness and range, made it the best fire support aircraft of the war.



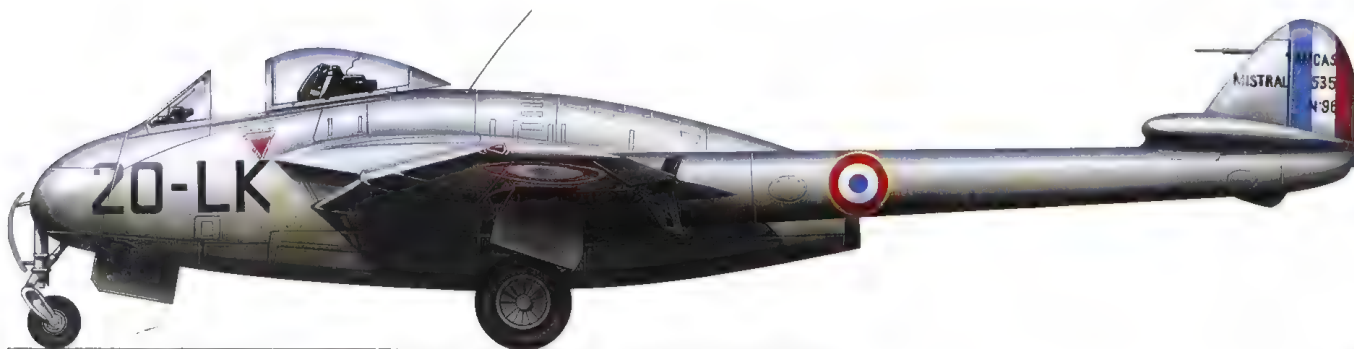
Piasecki H-21 of Flottille 31F. Nicknamed the "banane volante" (flying banana) by the French, this large twin-rotor helicopter was used to transport troops and for medi-vac. In 1958, the original white markings were replaced by less visible red ones.



Vought F4U-7 Corsair (12.F.17 — BuAer n° 133725) of Flottille 12 F, Algeria. Following several months using the Hellcat in Indochina, the 12 F changed its Grumman for the no less famous Corsair. It was with these aircraft, bearing the "Donald Duck" insignia, that the flotilla took off towards Telergma, in Algeria.



Republic P-47D Thunderbolt of the 20° Escadre de Chasse, Telergma, 1958. This veteran of the Second World War with a reputation for toughness and power was one of the first combat planes deployed by the French in Algeria. The P-47 was used for fire support missions in the Aurès and Oran regions.



SNCASE SE 535 Mistral of Escadron de Chasse (EC) 1/20, based at Aurès-Nementcha in 1958. This carried out mostly law and order missions. Too fast for this type of conflict, the Mistral, the French made (under licence) version of the British Vampire, was replaced mid-1960 by the AD-4 Skyraider.



Vought F4U-7 Corsair of Flottille 15 F. This "Triton" bears the distinctive pattern of black and yellow stripes used by French, British and Israeli aircraft during the Suez Crisis. After spending five months in Indochina, the 15F left for Egypt on board the *Lafayette*.



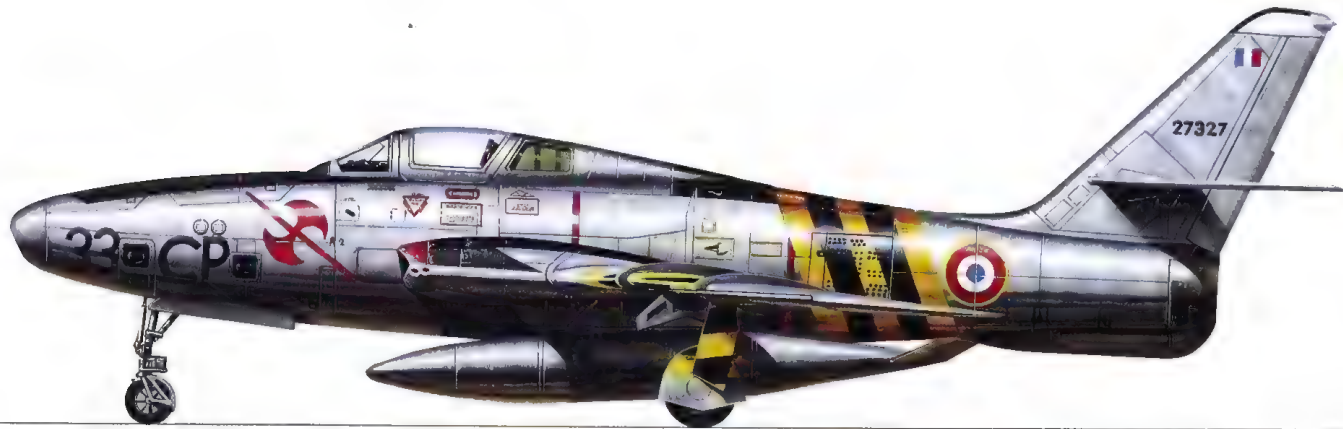
Vought F4U-7 Corsair of Flottille 14 F (14.F.9). This Corsair has an interesting decoration with its yellow stripes painted directly over the Glossy Sea Blue. These stripes had gaps for the serial numbers and aircraft codes. The blue of the roundels is of a dark shade.



Vought F4U-7 Corsair of Flottille 12 F (12.F.21). Like other aircraft with this unit, this Corsair was due to be used for the Suez operations. Sadly for the pilots, only a few aircraft were retained to serve as eventual reinforcements for the 14 F and 15 F.



Dassault Mystère IVA of Escadron de Chasse (EC) 3/2 "Alsace". This unit, normally based at Dijon, operated out of the Haifa airbase in Israel during the Suez Crisis. Used for air defence missions, these fighters allowed the Israeli planes to carry out their ground support missions.



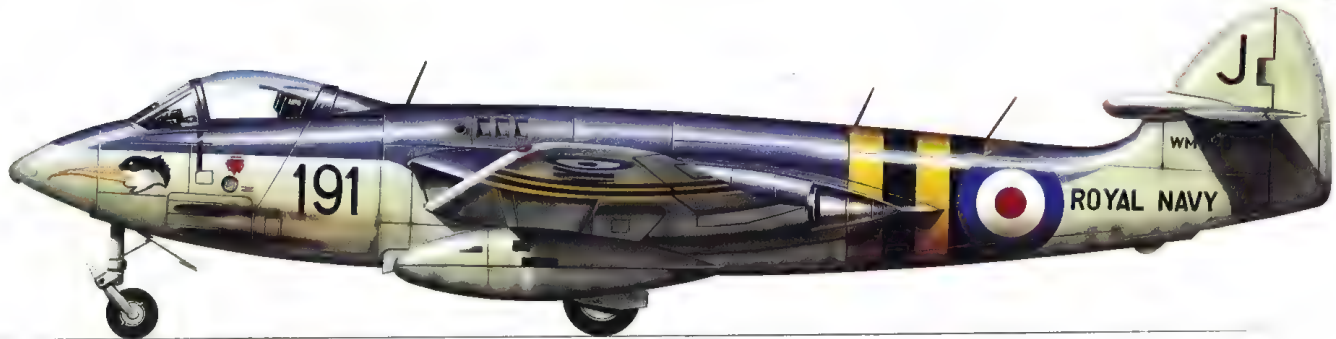
Republic RF-84F Thunderflash of Escadron de Reconnaissance (ER) 1/33 "Belfort" Armée de l'Air. Based at Akrotiri (Cyprus), these aircraft carried out reconnaissance missions for the Allies. The Armée de l'Air also used the armed version of this plane, the F-84F Thunderstreak, during "Operation Musketeer".



Dassault Mystère IVA n°196 of Escadron de Chasse (EC) 3/2 "Alsace", Ramat-David (Israel), October 1956. During "Operation Musketeer", the Franco-British-Israeli intervention on the Suez Canal, the "Alsace" squadron was based in Israel and attached to a fictitious Heyl Ha' Avir unit specially created for the intervention. The French Mystères, based in Hebrew territory to strengthen the air defences of the main Israeli towns, finally never intervened due to a lack of enemy aircraft, as the latter had mostly been destroyed on the ground and the intervention was rapidly aborted. Some French planes, as well as their Suez black and yellow identification stripes, which remained for a few weeks after their return to France, sometimes had Israeli roundels painted over the French ones.



F4U-7 of Flottille 14 F, Suez, 1954. This "Corsaire borgne" plane (one-eyed corsair), number 14.F.1 was one of the fourteen (today, this number remains uncertain) of the 14 F, which took part in the Suez Crisis. The propeller hub cone is painted black, the distinctive colour of this flotilla.



Hawker Sea Hawk FB Mk 3 of No 897 Squadron, based on the aircraft carrier *HMS Eagle* during Operation "Musketeer". These fighter-bombers had their baptism of fire at Suez, where the Royal Navy's aircraft undertook all of the support missions for the troops on the ground as the RAF Hunters based at Cyprus did not have the range to carry out these missions. The squadron insignia is a Tern's head painted on both sides of the fuselage. Apart from its four 20 mm cannons, the FB 3, the most produced version of the Sea Hawk, could carry a large payload under its specially strengthened wings.



Dassault MD 450 Ouragan of 113 Tayeset (Squadron) "Ha'Tsira'a" (wasps) of the Heyl Ha' Avir (Israeli Air Force). Originally tasked with defending the country against an Egyptian air attack, these fighters were rapidly used, given the absence of any threat, in a troop support role. In April 1956, an Ouragan scored its first kill against an Egyptian Vampire.

SIXTY The VIETNAM WAR



Although it has received more coverage than the wars of the nineteen-fifties, the Vietnam War still remains one of the poor relations of aviation literature, at least with European publishers. It is almost as if this period only interests Americans, but at least it is possible to buy a wide range of books in their country. It is very surprising that the skies of Vietnam, where thousands of propeller or jet aircraft and helicopters flew, do not hold much interest for aviation enthusiasts.

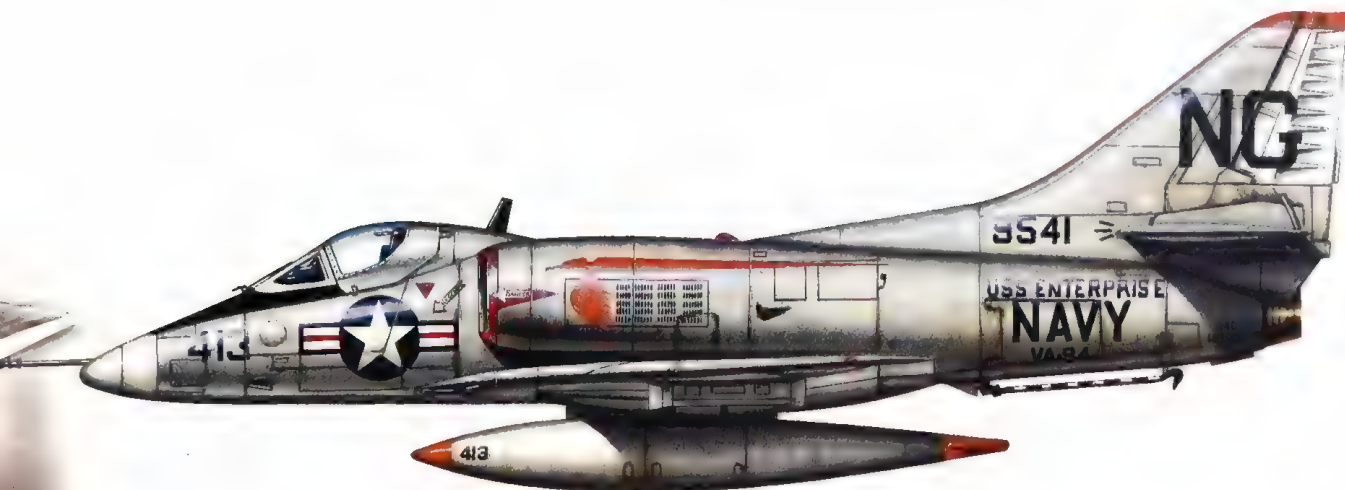
I was ten years old when the Vietnam War started and the news showed images concerning the growing conflict in South-East Asia that only adults could find dreadful. These reports were often interspersed with images of aircraft going about their terrible business, but which, with their predator like appearances, were fascinating for a child with a passion for planes. I lived in a small country town where the local toy shop owner had a few kits in plastic bags that did not interest me much. One day he had some «boxed» kits marked with the Frog logo and a magnificent and fairly military illustration.

The icing on the cake was that these pieces of plastic to be glued together were the planes that I could see in action on the small screen with a consequent white rectangle, from which my parents tried to keep me away by force. The next Thursday, I ran to the shop to buy the 1/72

scale F-105 «Thunderchief», a purchase that was naturally inspired by the beautiful illustration on the box. The «Thud» was my first kit, followed soon after by the strangely shaped «Mohawk», the elegant «Bronco» and a Corsair A-7 with its wings loaded with bombs.

During a visit to larger town, I came across a toy shop whose window displayed what I instantly took as being the most beautiful kit in the world. Indeed, I stood there gaping as I looked at the illustration of a kit, the brand of which I did not know, Revell, showing two Bell UH-1 Huey helicopters destroying a bridge that had already been partially damaged. Sadly, my parents did not give way to my pleas and promises of being good at school in the future, and I have to say that this disappointment still stands out today amongst the small disappointments of my young model-making soul. Given my look of disappointment, the shop assistant gave me a Revell catalogue where I discovered equally beautiful illustrations of the Hughes «Cayuse» and the «Phantom II». All of this might seem to be, and rightly so, vague childhood memories that many of us no doubt share. However, for me they played an important, even essential role in my future as the sight of all those boxes and richly illustrated catalogues made me decide, young kid that I was, that one day I would be an artist, the word illustrator being absent from my vocabulary.

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Douglas A-4C Skyhawk of VA-94 «Mighty Shrikes» based on the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise in 1966. Note the impressive tally of missions placed under the stylised bird of prey, the symbol of this «Attack Squadron». Mostly used for ground attacks, a «Scooter» (the Skyhawk's nickname) of the VA-76 «Spirits» still managed to shoot down a North Korean MiG-17. The most incredible thing is that this was achieved with a non-guided Zuni rocket, initially designed for ground attacks. The Skyhawk had many qualities, amongst which was its capability for taking punches; on the other hand, it only had a limited payload capability due to its small size. It was replaced by the A-7 Corsair II starting in 1966.



Douglas A-4C Skyhawk de la VA-216 «Black Diamonds», assigned to Commander Jack Monger and carried on board USS Hancock in 1966. The tail fin's «NP» code signifies that this «Scooter», with its 11 mission markings, belongs to the US Navy Pacific Fleet.



McDonnell F-4J Phantom II of VF-31, based on USS Saratoga. This plane was flown by Cdr Samuel «Sam» Flynn, who, accompanied by his navigator, Lt William H. John «Bill», shot down a MiG-21 with a AIM-9 missile on 21 June 1972. The «Tomcatters» aircraft bears the traditional red facings and the camouflage scheme of Light Gull Gray for the upper surfaces and Gloss White for the lower surfaces. The Felix the Cat emblem is clearly visible here, placed on a black-edged yellow circle.



Piasecki CH-21 Workhorse. Also known as a Shawnee, this helicopter was, at the beginning of the Vietnam War, the US Army's main aircraft, used mostly for troop transportation. Its defensive armament often comprised of one .30 or .50 calibre (7.62 mm or 12.7 mm) machine-gun placed in the starboard door. After two years of loyal service, this old piston engine «workhorse» was replaced by the Bell UH-1 Iroquois.



Hughes OH-6 Cayuse of the 16th Cavalry Regiment (16CAV) «Dark Horse», in 1972.

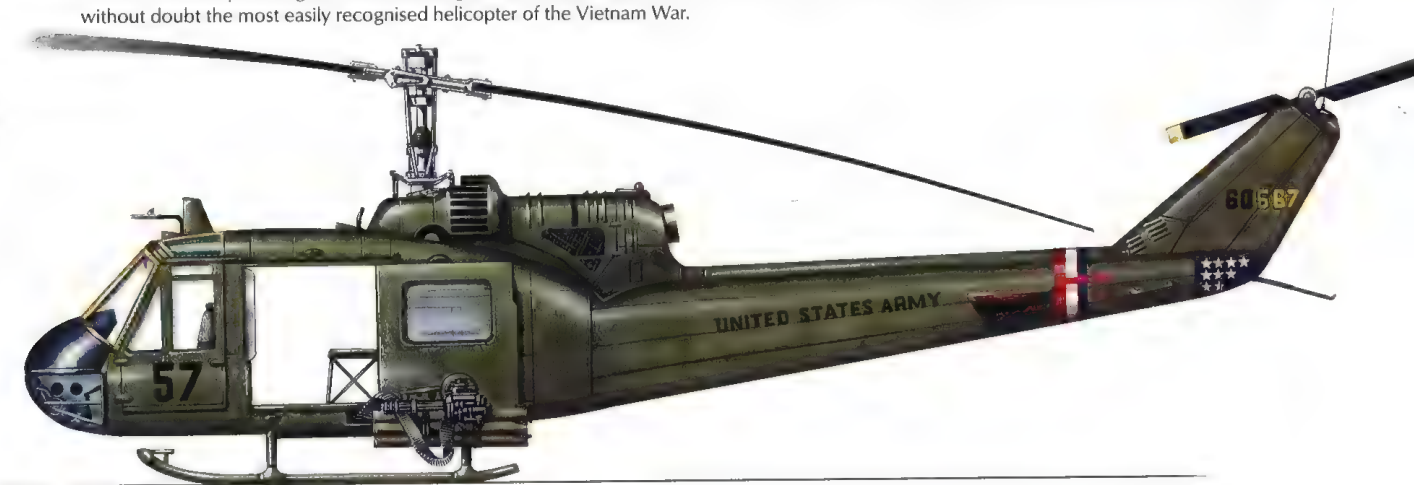
This small helicopter, also nicknamed the Loach, was mostly used for observation. However, equipped with a pilot operated Minigun and a side firing M60 machine-gun, it proved to be a formidable aircraft at low altitude, despite the heavy losses of the US Army.



Sikorsky HH-53B Super Jolly Green Giant. The Super Jolly was developed mainly for search and rescue missions for aircrew lost in the jungle. Its extra fuel tanks allowed it to fly deep into enemy territory. Vulnerable to ground fire, the powerful helicopter was given extra armour plating and some carried the 7.62 mm M.134 Minigun.



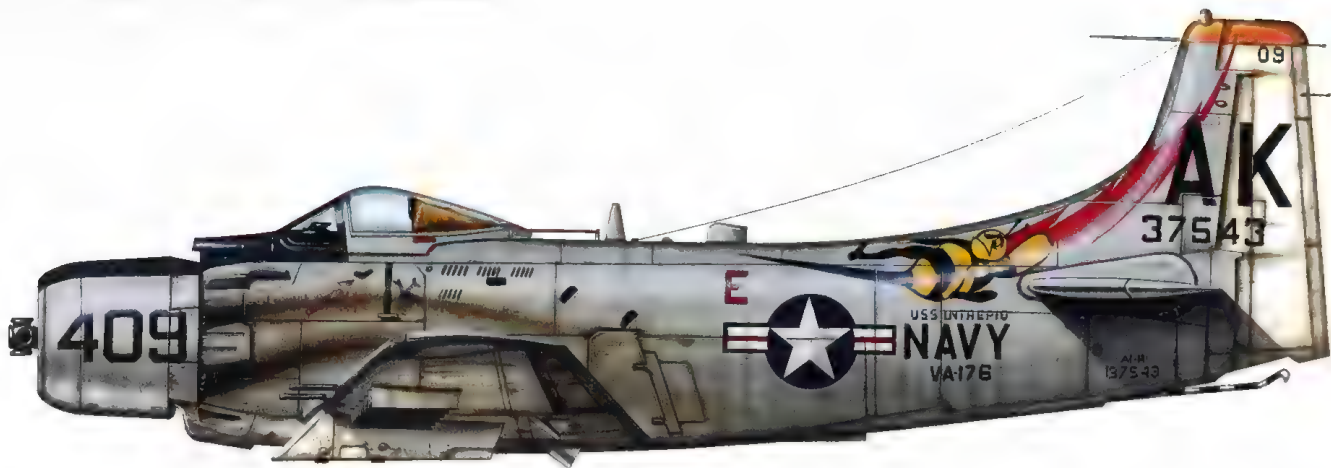
Bell UH-1B Iroquois, of the «Crocodile» Gun Platoon, 119th Aviation Company, in 1965. The aircraft carries two side mounted 24 barrel 2.75 inch XM3 «Big Bertha» rocket-launchers. To «improve» this firepower, a WM5 «Thumper» turret armed with a 40 mm grenade-launcher has been added to the nose. It is easy to imagine the devastating effect of this weapon's 240 rounds a minute. With its incomparable shape, the Bell UH-1, or «Huey», is without doubt the most easily recognised helicopter of the Vietnam War.



Bell UH-1 Gunship «Huey Hog». More powerful than the UH-1B and able to receive any kind of armament, the aircraft seen here carries two 2.75-inch XM156 rocket-launchers, each one accompanied by a M134 Minigun. These two weapons had 6,000 rounds that were stored under the floor. This rocket and Minigun configuration became the standard armament on the Huey after 1966. The helicopter portrayed here belongs to the 50th AHC «Cougars» based at Phu Cat.



Boeing CH-47C Chinook. Ironically nicknamed Shithook by the infantry, the very powerful Chinook was used in many roles: medivac, troop carrying, freight and fuel transportation, carrying artillery pieces and so on. The defensive armament consisted of one or two .30 (7.62 mm) machine-guns. The aircraft seen here belongs to the 1st Cavalry Regiment based at Camp Bear Cat in 1971.



Douglas A-1H Skyraider of the VA-176 «Thunderbolt» based on the aircraft carrier USS Intrepid in 1966 and flown by Lieutenant Patton. Whilst flying this plane, Patton shot down, with his cannon, a North Vietnamese MiG-17 on 9 October 1966. Note that another «Spad», the Skyraider's nickname, had already shot down a jet in June 1965, flown this time by Lieutenant Clint Johnson of the VA-25 «Fists of the Fleet».

Considered as being a veritable «workhorse» during this conflict, the Skyraider was deployed in great numbers at the very outset of the Vietnam War as its payload capacities allowed it to carry all sorts of weaponry. It was also used in an escort capacity during the «Sandy» helicopter missions carried out by helicopters.



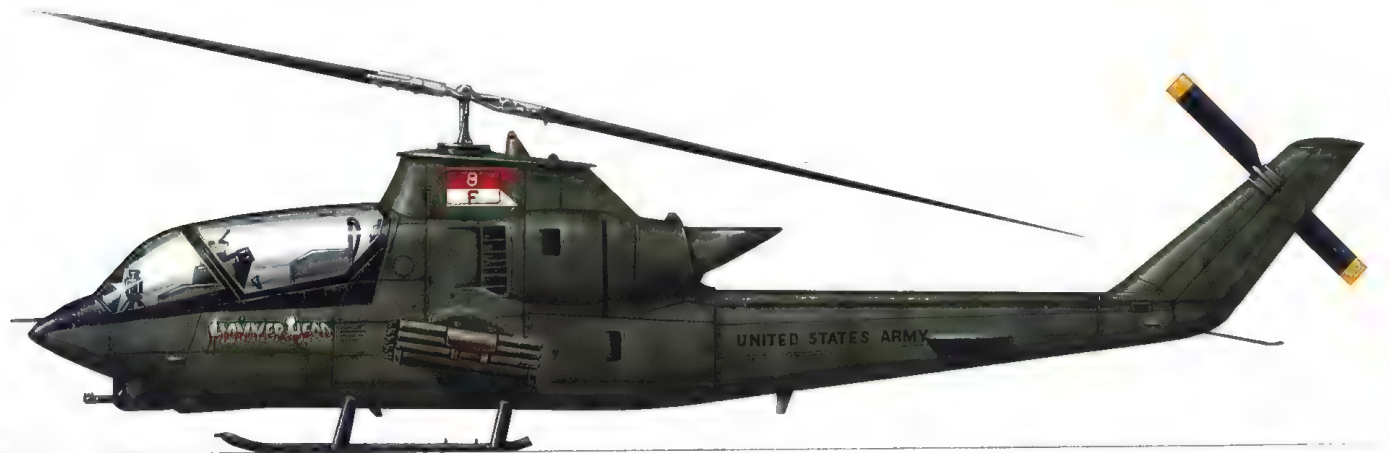
North American-Rockwell OV-10A Bronco of VMO-2 of the Marine Corps aviation based at Da Nang in 1970. This plane is equipped with an extra somewhat unconventional 20 mm GPU-2 cannon. It was with the Marines that the Bronco had its baptism of fire in July 1968. As well as its original 7.62 mm M60 machine-guns, it could carry 2.75 or 5 inch rockets, Mk. 6 smoke target markers, but also seismic sensors that could pick up troop movements.



Douglas A-1H (AD-6) Skyraider of the 516th Fighter Squadron, 41st Tactical Wing, Da Nang (Vietnam), 1966. This South Vietnamese Air Force aircraft (VNAF) bears the new small-size roundel and the three-tone camouflage scheme typical of this period, the latter sometimes being known by its acronym of SEA (South East Asia).



Bell AH-1G Cobra. «Squatter Swatter» one of the aircraft flown by First Lieutenant Hugh Mills, of the 16th Cavalry Regiment (16CAV) «Dark Horse» in 1969. Apart from its turret-mounted M134 Minigun, the aircraft carries a 19 round M200A-1 rocket pod on each side, along with seven other M158A-1 rocket launching barrels. The arrival of the more modern Cobra did not mean that its older counterpart, the Iroquois, was prevented from continuing in this theatre of operations.



Bell AH-1G Cobra. More complex and difficult to use than its famous predecessor, the UH-1E «Huey Gunship», the Cobra soon became a formidable weapons platform that was difficult to attack from the ground due to its nimble flight characteristics and speed. «Hammer Head», of the 8th Cavalry Regiment based at Da-Nang in 1972, seen here, destroyed a North Vietnamese PT- 76 tank and was equipped with a 40 mm grenade-launcher and a forward turret mounted 7.62 mm Minigun. The exhaust is prolonged by a long fairing, which reduced the risk of being picked up by heat-seeking SA-7 missiles.



Grumman OV-1C Mohawk of the 1st Infantry Division («Big Red One»), based at Phu Loi in 1967. As with many of this division's Mohawks, the nose has been decorated with a shark mouth (without eyes here). In photos of this aircraft, the divisional insignia «Big Red One» is placed in a dark coloured shield, probably yellow. Equipped with four infrared sensors that allowed it to detect in real time heat sources, even low ones (camp fires, gun flashes etc.), the OV-1 could undertake almost instantaneously ground attack missions. Also, although it was originally an un-armed reconnaissance plane, the Mohawk could carry cannon and rocket pods for fire support and ground troop support missions. In 1966, a «harmless» Mohawk thus shot down a North Vietnamese MiG-17 with a rocket!



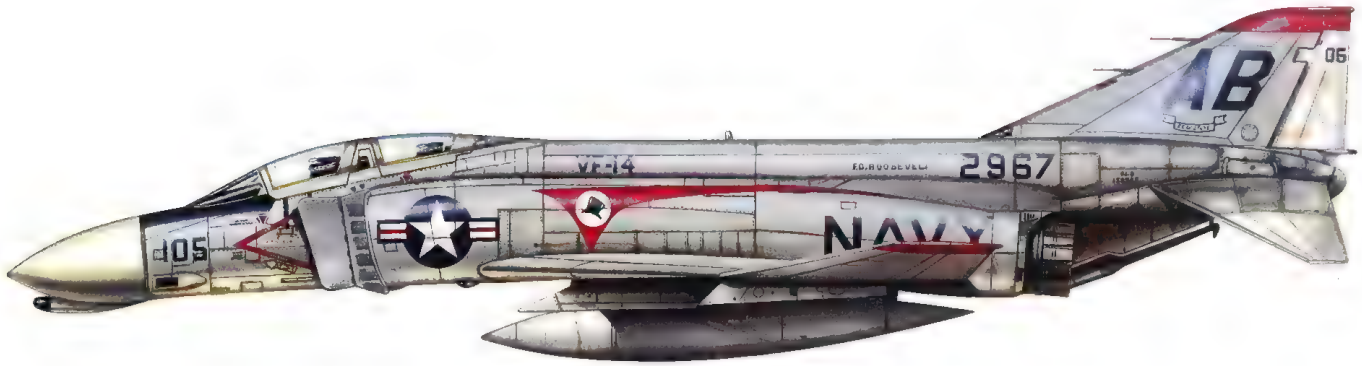
LTV F-8E Crusader of the VF-53 «Irons Angels», based on the aircraft carrier USS Bonhomme Richard (CVA-31). This plane's pilot, Lieutenant Commander Guy Cane, had a confirmed North Vietnamese MiG kill in July 1968.



LTV A-7A Corsair II of the VA-147 «Argonauts». Supposed to replace the venerable Skyhawk, the Corsair II entered into service in the Gulf of Tonkin at the end of 1967. With a much greater range than the A-4, its high payload capability, two Sidewinder missiles and two 20 mm cannon, the A-7 nicknamed the SLUF (Short Little Ugly Fucker) proved to be, amongst other things, a particularly efficient ground attack aircraft. The plane portrayed here, with its attractive livery and operating from the aircraft carrier USS Ranger in 1968, later served with the VF-122 «Flying Eagles».



LTV F-8E Crusader of the VF-53 «Iron Angels». The aircraft is seen here on board the aircraft carrier USS Hancock in 1967. The VF-53 first saw action during the events that took place in reprisal for the so-called Gulf of Tonkin incident, during which the Crusaders of the «Iron Angels», accompanied by Skyraiders and Skyhawks, destroyed 35 enemy patrol boats. Liked by its pilots, notably during dogfights, it was more the reassuring presence of its four 20 mm cannon and four Sidewinder missiles that made it so popular.



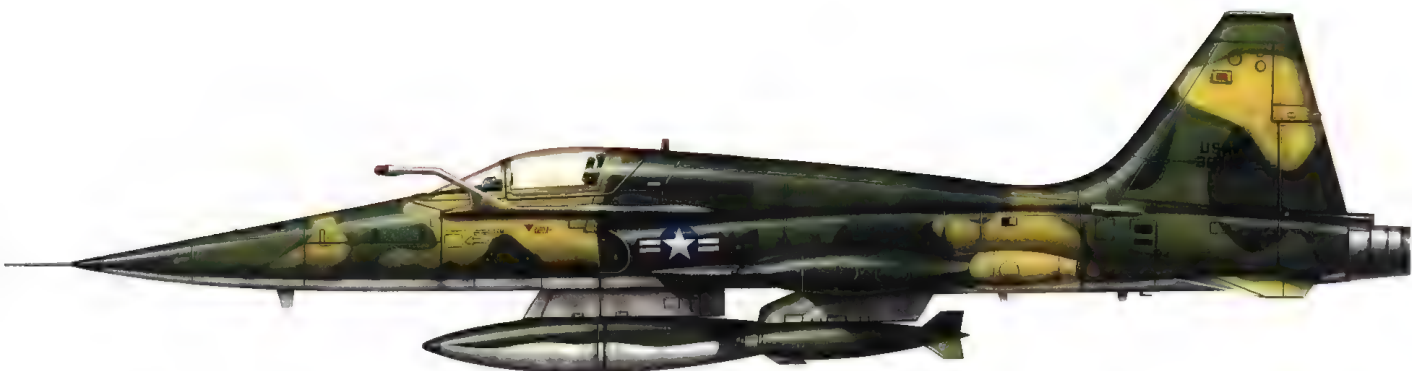
MacDonnell F-4B Phantom II of the famous VF-14 «Tophatters», based on board the aircraft carrier USS Roosevelt. Following the events of the Gulf of Tonkin and the apparent refusal, two years later, by the Vietnamese to head towards a peace agreement, the «Top Hat» decorated planes were ordered to proceed to South East Asia in 1966. This assignment was short-lived and was over by the end of 1967. During this deployment, the crews did not encounter a single MiG, and despite a very present anti-aircraft defence, no plane was lost, the only materiel loss being caused by a bad landing by an inexperienced pilot.



Rockwell RA-5C Vigilante of the RVAH-11 «Checkertails», seen here on board the aircraft carrier USS Constellation and initially based on the aircraft carrier USS Forrestal. The latter was struck by tragedy when a fire broke out on the flight deck, killing 132 of the crew and destroying numerous planes, including three Vigilantes. The RA-5C portrayed here, later bore (in 1972), occasionally, a shark mouth on its jet engine intakes. Originally designed as a carrier-borne nuclear bomber, the Vigilante was used in a photographic reconnaissance role over Vietnam. Stripped of their armament, these planes were most often escorted by Phantoms, but this did not prevent the loss of 18 aircraft, whereas others only managed to save themselves thanks to their formidable top speed.



Republic F-105D Thunderchief of the 562nd Tactical Fighter Squadron (TFS), 23rd Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW), based at Da Nang in 1965. This n° 169 bears the insignia of the Tactical Air Command (TAC) on the tail fin, as well as the famous Looney Tunes Sylvester the cat. This was partially painted orange to highlight the unit's motto of «Every Man a Tiger». Paradoxically, this unit did not see action in Vietnam.



USAF Northrop F-5A Freedom Fighter. This plane is equipped with a refuelling boom on the port side and bears the four-colour SEA (South East Asia) type camouflage.

On 23 October 1965, a detachment of 12 aircraft of the 4503rd Tactical Fighter Squadron, to which this aircraft might have belonged, went to the Bien-Hoa in order to test in real conditions this aircraft designed for the needs of third world country air forces. The South Vietnamese Air Force (VNAF), entirely equipped and run by the United States, used a great many F-5 aircraft in the A and E versions throughout the war.

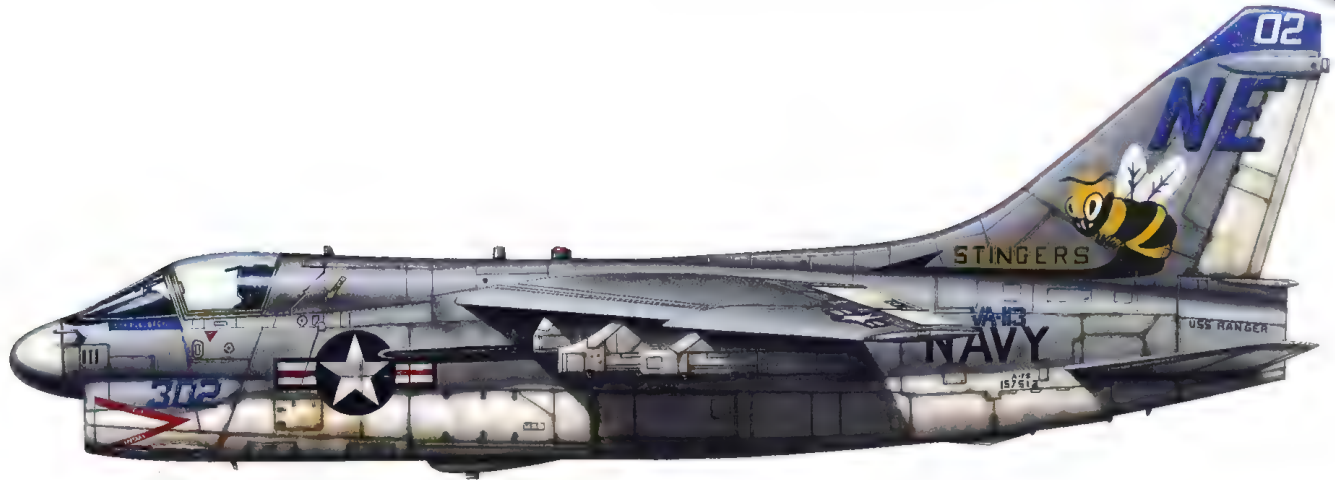


North American F-100D Super Sabre of the 306th Tactical Fighter Squadron. Super Sabre pilots carried out 360,286 sorties throughout the entire Vietnamese conflict, losing 186 aircraft to enemy anti-aircraft defences. 45 other planes were lost due to various reasons, including the loss of an engine during a mission.

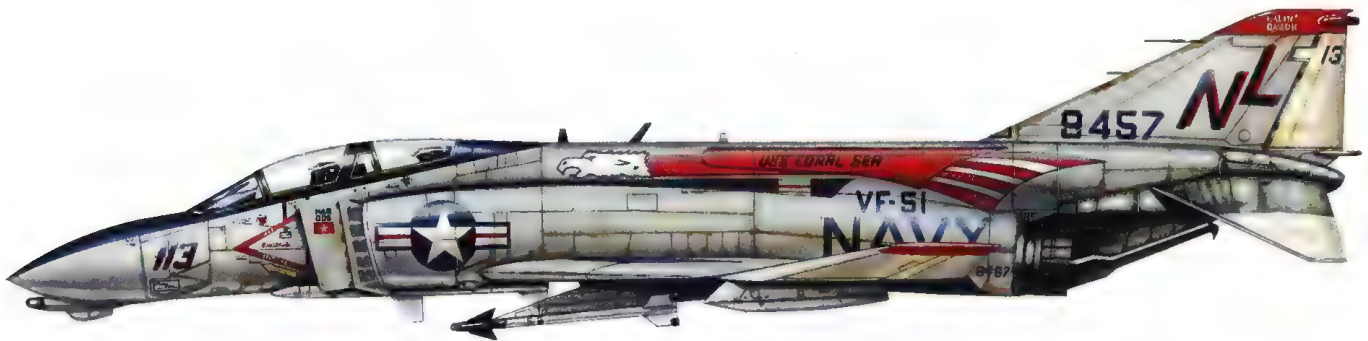
The F-100 began to be deployed in South East Asia in April 1962, when a detachment of the 510th Tactical Fighter Squadron, from Clark airfield in the Philippines, flew to the Don Muang international airport near Bangkok as part of Operation Bell Tone. The latter was undertaken to bring aerial reinforcements to the Thai and South Vietnamese governments that were in difficulty.



Mc Donnell F-4E Phantom II. This version, heavier and longer than the first F-4, was equipped with an internal 20 mm Vulcan cannon and a Westinghouse APQ-120 radar. Having arrived to replace the aging F-105, the F-4E carried out their first combat mission on 26 November 1968. Despite being banned by the US Air Force General Staff, the shark mouths remained on these aircraft until the end of the war. The aircraft portrayed here belonged to the 388th Tactical Fighter Wing.



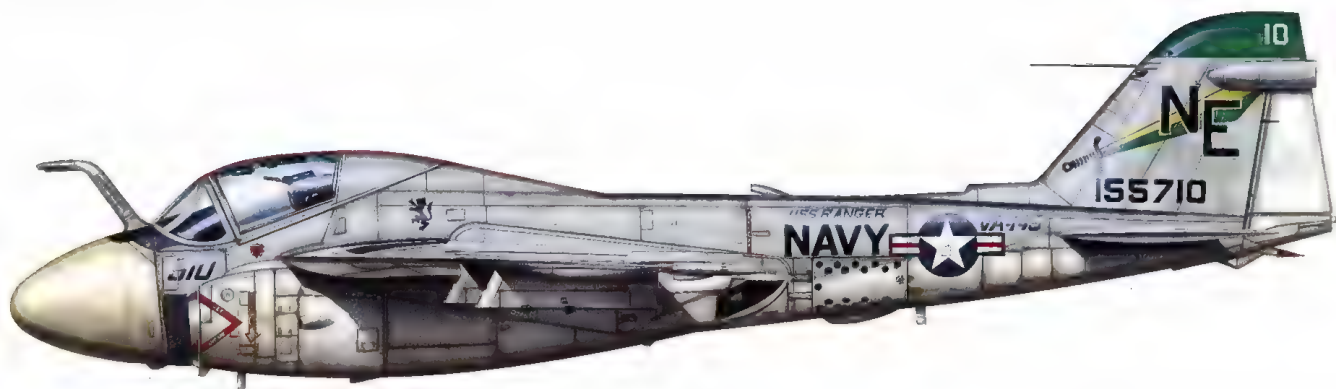
LTV A-7E Corsair II of the VA-113 (Navy Attack Squadron One Thirteen) «Stingers» based on the aircraft carrier USS Ranger in 1971. The decoration of these «Stingers» is without doubt one of the most elaborate ever seen on an A-7. The aircraft portrayed here, which joined VA-113 in 1970, was flown by Lieutenant Robert Beck in 1971. This Corsair II, which emerged from the war unscathed, continued a less warlike, but nevertheless eventful career that ended in 1990. The successor of the A-4 Skyhawk, the Corsair showed itself to be a formidable ground attack aircraft and was present until the end of the war, taking part in the last evacuation missions in 1975.



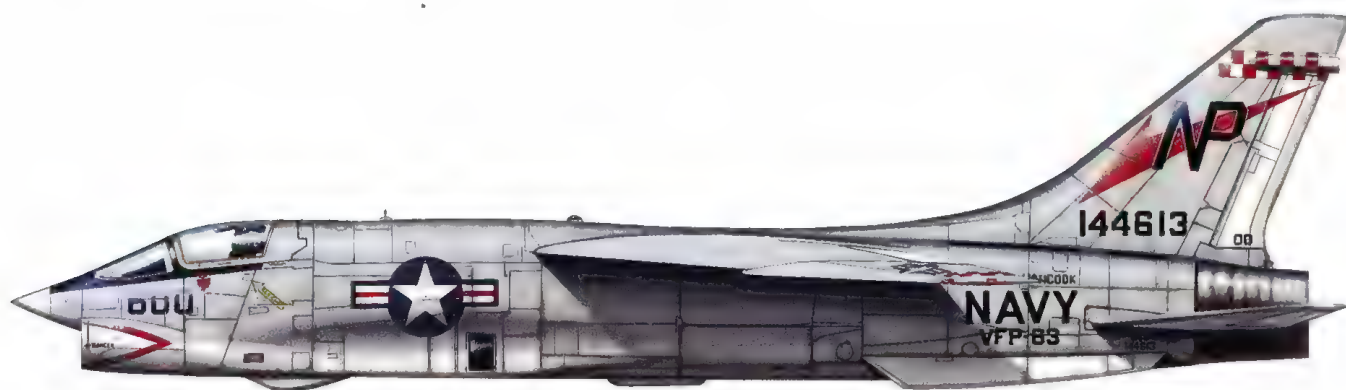
McDonnell Douglas F-4B Phantom II of VF-51 «Screamin Eagle», with which Winston Copeland and Don Bouchoux shot down a MiG-17 with an AIM-9 missile on June 1972. The real «owner» of this plane, Lieutenant Ken Cannon, accompanied by Lieutenant Roy Morris, whose nickname (Ragin Cajun) can be seen at the top of the tail fin, also shot down a «Fresco» whilst flying this plane on 10 May 1972. The F-4B had its baptism of fire in 1964, flying from the aircraft carrier USS Constellation. This aircraft's decoration is particularly elaborate and one of the most attractive ever seen on a Phantom II.



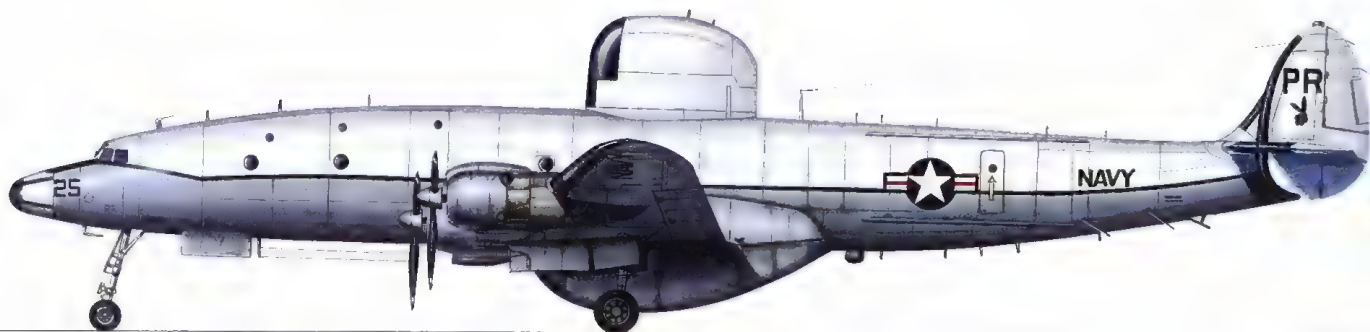
McDonnell Douglas F-4J Phantom II. It was whilst flying this plane, nicknamed «Showtime», that Lieutenants Randy Cunningham and Willie Driscoll, of the VF-96 «Fighting Falcons», shot down in one day on 10 May 1972, three MiG-17. A SAM missile brought an end to their «turkey shoot», but the two men were able to eject and were later picked up safe and sound. Having previously shot down a MiG-21 and a MiG-17, «Duke» Cunningham thus became an ace. The crew next flew another plane with the same attractive livery plus the addition of a stylised white MiG on a black triangle on the tail fin, as well as the kill markings on the left boundary layer bleed. The F-4J entered into the Vietnam War in 1968, operating from the aircraft carrier USS America.



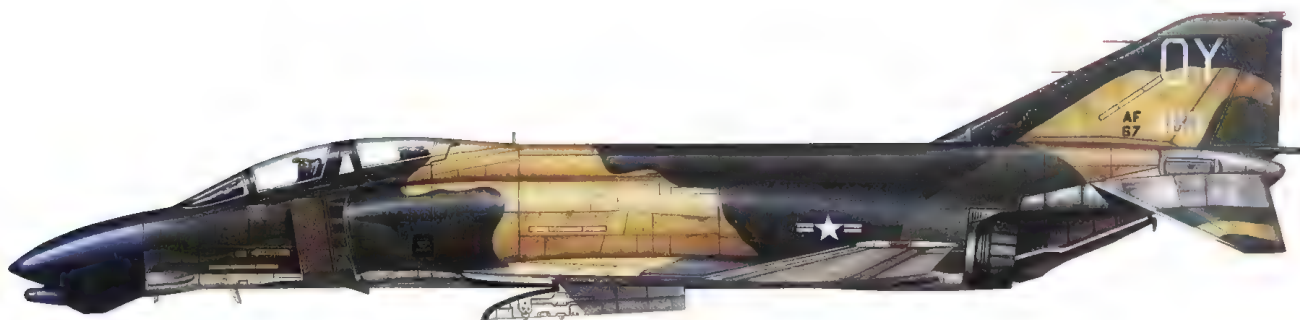
Grumman A-6B Intruder of the VA-145 (Navy Light Attack Squadron) «Swordsmen», based on the aircraft carrier USS Ranger. The aircraft portrayed here is seen during the final bombing missions over Vietnam in 1975. The decoration of the VA-145 underwent several modifications with, notably, yellow lightning bolts accompanying the sword. The Intruder was deployed in South East Asia in 1965 with the «Sunday Punchers» based on the aircraft carrier USS Independence. Throughout this war it proved itself to be a good all-weather medium bomber with the US Navy, but also with the Marine Corps. The in-flight refuelling KA-6D version was also widely used during the conflict.



LTV RF-8G Crusader of the VFP 63 (Light Photographic Squadron) «Eyes of The Fleet», seen here in 1971 and based on the aircraft carrier USS Hancock. During their service in Vietnam, some DET-1 (Detachment One) aircraft changed their star spangled blue or black stripes for red and white chevrons, also placed on the wing tips, and a red chevron, like their fighter counterparts. Later, aircraft of the same squadron used once more the star spangled stripes, but this time in red.



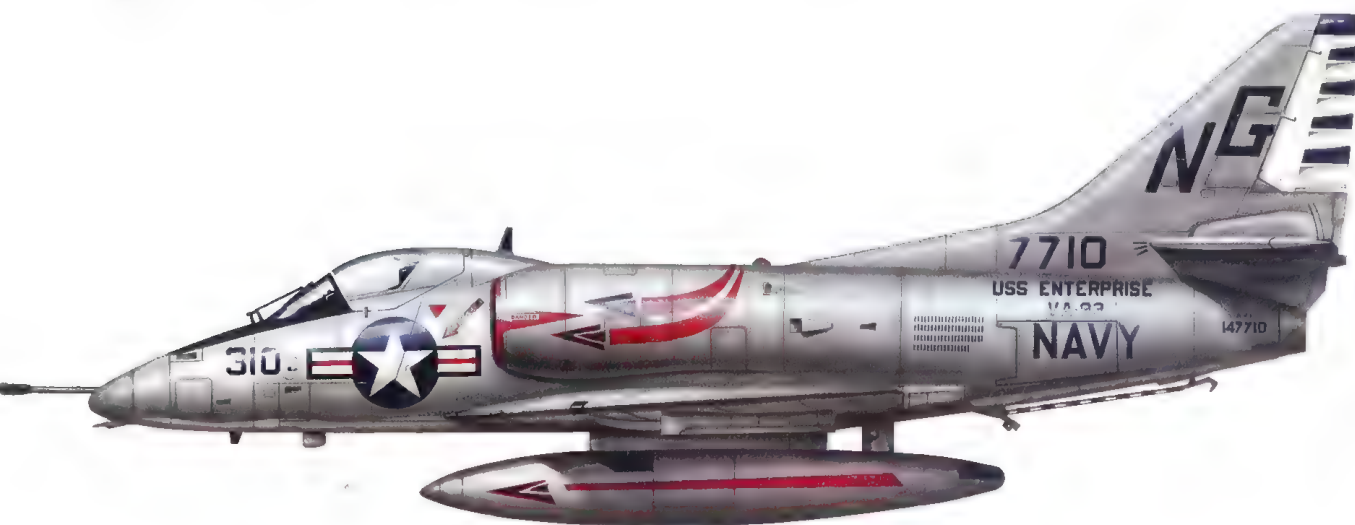
Lockheed EC-121J Warning Star of VQ-1 (Electronic Countermeasures Squadron One), sent to Vietnam where it was twice damaged whilst stationed at Da Nang. This aircraft began its career in 1958 with a Weather Reconnaissance Squadron, before being, in 1965, attached to an anti-submarine unit, then, in 1966, to the electronic countermeasures VQ-1. After its service in Vietnam, from 1967 to 1970, the four-engine aircraft was transferred to Guam (Mariana Islands), before returning to the United States, Arizona to be precise, where it was finally scrapped.



McDonnell F-4D Phantom II. This aircraft of the 555th TFS/432nd TRW, was flown by Captain Steve Ritchie and Captain Chuck Debellevue (Radar Intercept Officer – RIO –) the only USAF aces during this war, with five kills for Ritchie and six for Debellevue. The aircraft has the three-colour tone SEA (South East Asia) camouflage scheme comprising of Medium Green, Dark Green and Tan with Light Gray lower surfaces, so typical of the Vietnam War. Note the six tally markings represented by red, white-bordered stars painted on the air intakes.



McDonnell F-4B Phantom of the VF-111 «Sundowners », based on the aircraft carrier USS Coral Sea. It was whilst flying this aircraft on 6 March 1972, that Lieutenant Gary Weigand «Greyhound » and Lieutenant (junior grade) Bill «Farkle » Freckleton shot down a MiG-17. The very graphic representation of the «setting sun» of this squadron is without doubt one of the most flamboyant liveries used by US Navy aircraft during the bitter Vietnamese conflict.



Douglas A-4C Skyhawk of Attack Squadron of the VA-93 based on the aircraft carrier USS Enterprise, Viet Nam, from October 1965 to June 1966. The VA-93 was deployed in this theatre of operations from 1965 to 1968.



Douglas A-4C Skyhawk of the VA-36 «Roadrunners», seen here on USS Intrepid in 1968. This unit's planes bore a «Roadrunner» on the sides of the fuselage, largely inspired by the cartoon character.



Douglas A-4E Skyhawk of the VA-152 «Wild Aces», based on the aircraft carrier USS Shangri-La and seen here in 1970. The VA-152 spent a short period of time in South East Asia between March and December 1970. The livery of this aircraft is particularly colourful.



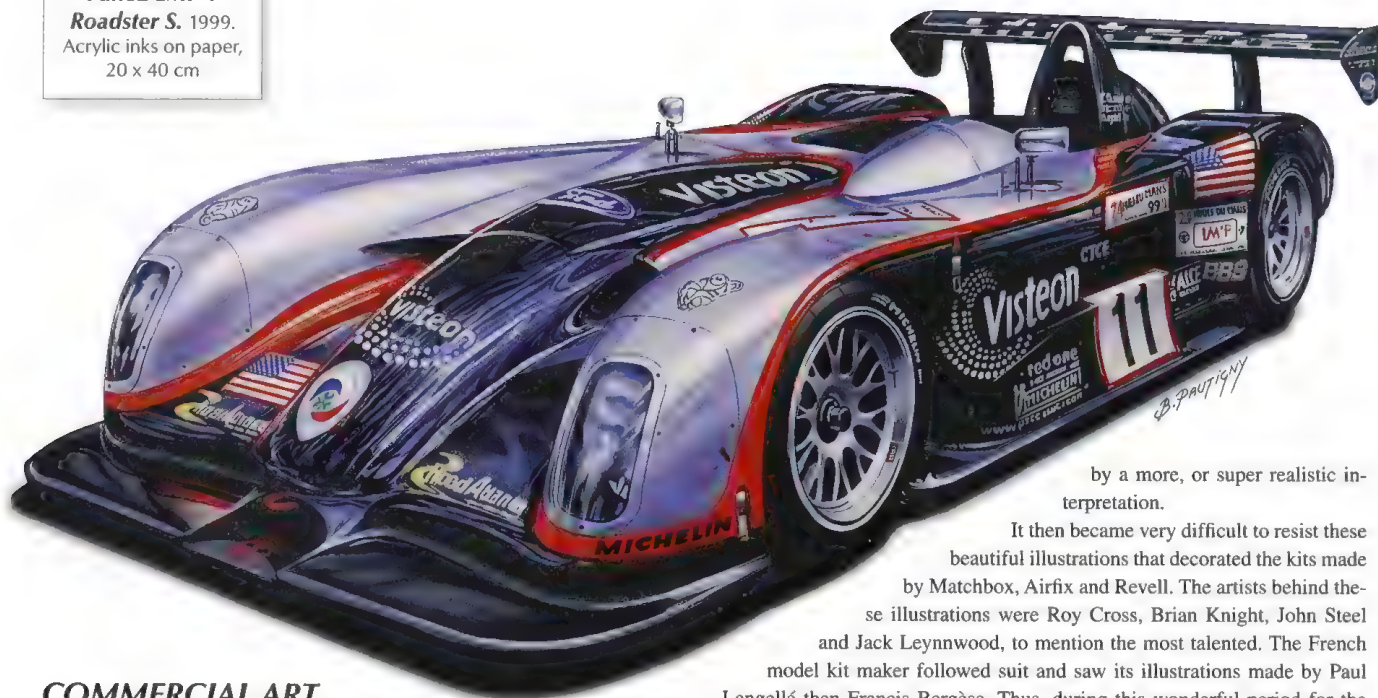
Douglas A-4M of the VMA-324 «Vagabonds» seen here in 1972. This unit was equipped with Skyhawks in 1959, but the «Vagabonds» of the Marine Corps received the final Douglas made version on 13 April 1971.

ONE ILLUSTRATOR, SOME ILLUSTRATIONS



Alpha Jet «Patrouille de France»,
Box art. Acrylic inks, 36 x 51 cm
North American F-6 Mustang.
Box art. Acrylic inks, 32 x 68

**Panoz LMP-1
Roadster S. 1999.**
Acrylic inks on paper,
20 x 40 cm



by a more, or super realistic interpretation.

It then became very difficult to resist these beautiful illustrations that decorated the kits made by Matchbox, Airfix and Revell. The artists behind these illustrations were Roy Cross, Brian Knight, John Steel and Jack Leynwood, to mention the most talented. The French model kit maker followed suit and saw its illustrations made by Paul Lengellé then Francis Bergèse. Thus, during this wonderful period for the model kit, the major international kit makers made their sales purely on the visual impact of their boxes. Shops, the only places where we could satisfy our passion, then only had to place these richly illustrated boxes in their shop windows in order to attract the young customer and his pocket money.

THE EMERGENCE OF POLITICAL CORRECTNESS AND ITS CONSEQUENCES

At the same time, in the name of protecting the young, swastikas were banished from the box illustrations. The artists, used to producing art that was as historically accurate as possible, moaned a little, but the kit makers did not want to take the risk of being taken to court and unjustly branded as being pro-nazi. Although a child has never been seen leaving a shop «goose-stepping», the ban remains. One should remember the model kit boxes where the swastikas were simply omitted from the transfer sheet. Other manufacturers, to cover themselves, much to the modellers' great displeasure, cut them in two, as two half crosses did not make a cross. Although the disappearance of the swastika from the tail fins of German planes only slightly changed the illustration, only the historical truth was truncated. The summit of this ridiculous trend was reached with the appearance of Finnish planes decorated with big, empty white circles. There were also model kit boxes where the swastikas were simply omitted from the transfer sheets by some manufacturers in order to cover themselves, much to the displeasure of the model makers.

At the same time, associations against «war toys» saw the day, mainly in the Nordic countries, and the world of model kits found itself in their sights;

COMMERCIAL ART

How many publications concerning our passion have we bought mainly because they include coloured and profile illustrations of our favourite planes ?

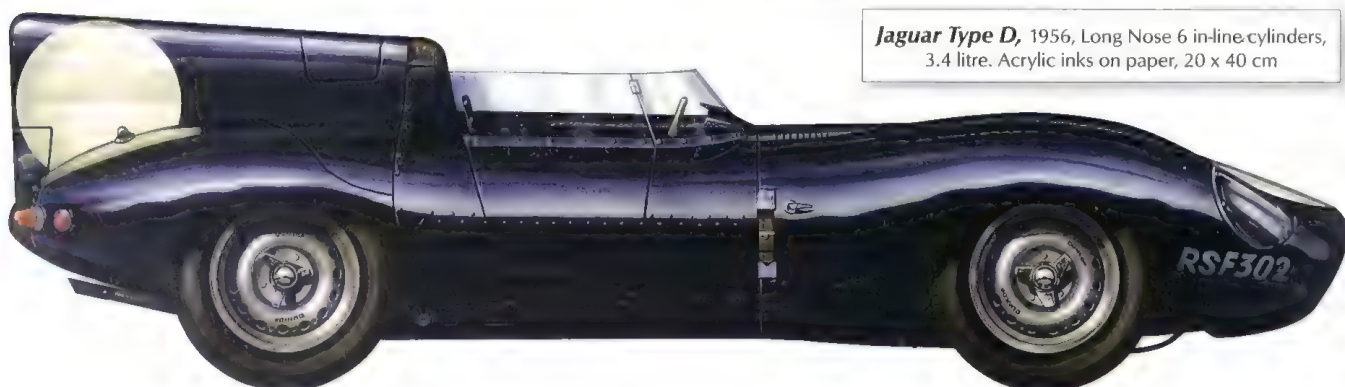
We have all rushed to buy these more or less well made publications, whether or not the contents were interesting or accurate.

British publishers have made a speciality of this sort of publication, often in the shape of instalments to be collected in binders, the illustrations of which, reappear repetitively throughout the years (as is still the case today) in binder form, but with different covers to hide this form of recycling. In the United States, the Squadron publishers offered its illustrations with some in an «Italian» format, which became a rapid success. Once again, we were encouraged to buy these by the inclusion of double pages of profiles and an illustrated outside back cover. The British publishers, Osprey, made a remarkable entry into the world of military books, using the best artists, to offer today a catalogue of several hundred magnificently illustrated books.

NEVER MIND THE CONTENTS...

The same observations concern model kits. How many models have we happily bought (or unhappily later) as children or teenagers, after «falling in love» with the attractive illustration on the box ? Dynamic, colourful, realistic, even aggressive, never mind the way of describing it, the box, and only the box, made us want to buy the kit, regardless of its contents.

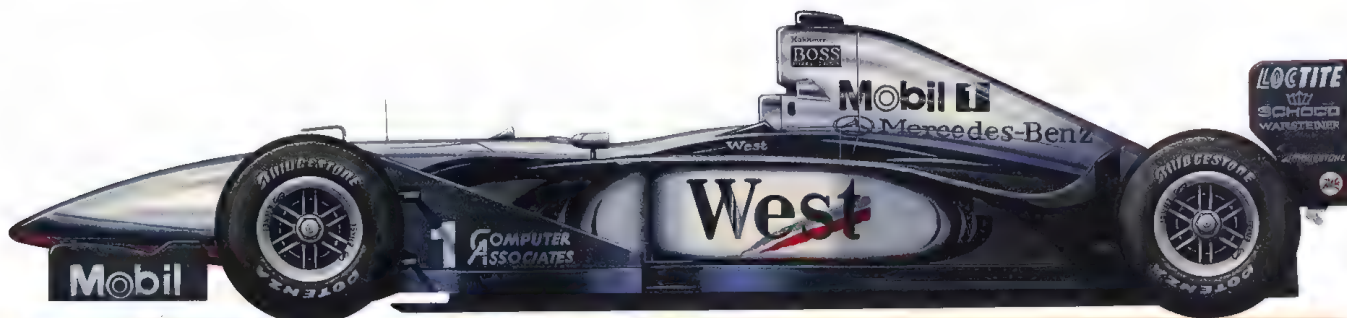
The beginning of the 1970s saw a real artistic transition, with the very colourful boxes of the 1960s showing a more or less realistic plane, being replaced



Jaguar Type D, 1956, Long Nose 6 in-line cylinders,
3.4 litre. Acrylic inks on paper, 20 x 40 cm

Mika Hakkinen.

1999. MP 4/14.
Acrylic inks on paper,
30 x 40 cm

**ABOUT THE AUTHOR...**

Bruno Pautigny was born in 1958, on June 6th to be precise, a D-Day that went totally unnoticed in history.

At school he did not show much interest in the subjects taught, he was a melancholy daydreamer who, as soon as the teacher's back was turned, would ride away on the back of a coloured pencil or fly away on a paper plane.

From the fourth year of primary school he decided that his life would be devoted to drawing, something which he stated out loud at the end of a history lesson to the laughs and mockery of the other kids and a sceptical teacher. Sadly, at an age when the child begins his frightening metamorphosis towards becoming an adult and where it is imperative and abhorrent to choose a definitive career path, his parents, for reasons that were not easily understood, especially at the time, were against studying art that they saw as something that would offer a precarious future. He was, therefore, pushed towards more serious studies, notably forestry. With this sorry period of studying over, he headed for the sawmills with the sole goal of leaving for Africa or Central America to undertake his profession of forester. Following the evaporation of a promised job as a prospector in Gabon, Bruno did a series of odd jobs whilst waiting for a change of fortune. Another African job beckoned, but when this too fell through, he gave up on his desires for adventure in Africa. Back in Paris, a friend who had set up a small advertising agency, asked him if he would like to try out his

pencils with the company. However, after a few months, the venture failed and Pautigny decided to go it alone as an illustrator, learning the trade in the evenings following a day doing odd jobs. It goes without saying that learning airbrush illustrating without any training or help, apart from English technical books, was somewhat laborious. During this period of the nineteen-nineties, illustrating usually meant illustrating advertising. It was this path that Pautigny took, armed with a press-book that included rare personal research of such artistic quality that the first people to see it forced themselves to remain polite, and even had to stop themselves from bursting out in laughter. However, one of them decided to give this apprentice illustrator a chance by asking him to make a few medical illustrations.

The result was not too bad, and thanks to these new references, Bruno was able to go and knock on the door of other agencies. He thus became a «general» illustrator, taking any work that came his way, be it medical, food or industrial, with a particular liking for machinery, especially cars, as illustrations of aircraft proved to be extremely rare.

Before long, he became totally fed up with the world of advertising. Indeed, it was difficult to put up with the whims of «pony-tailed» men and shrews with square glasses, asking him to work within impossible time limits, as short as they possibly could be, whereas the time limits to be paid seemed particularly elastic. Discouraged,

the new illustrator looked towards book publishers, a much nicer environment, much less well paid, but with reasonable, or at least better defined time limits. He was given the opportunity to undertake aeronautical illustrations for Revell for the boxes of their new kits, but also adverts for their distributors.

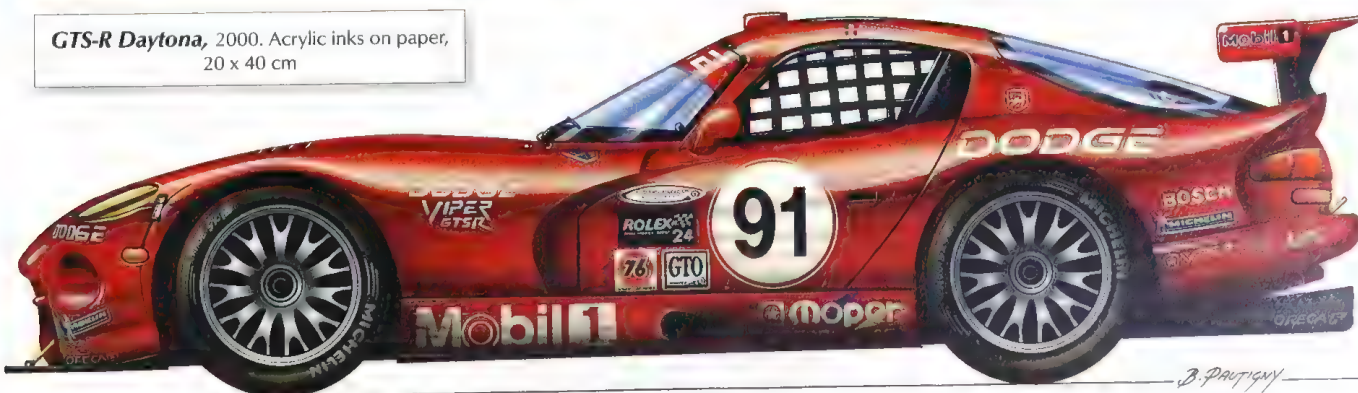
Other opportunities followed, still with model kit boxes, but for independent customers.

Next came profile illustrations, a particular art form which consists of giving a realistic aspect to a technical drawing obviously stripped of any decor or scenery. Our illustrator applied the same technique that he used for his other work, this being a mix of airbrush work and the venerable brush.

Today, in a world surrounded by images, the profession of illustrator has paradoxically become more and more uncertain, with modern techniques imposing quickly-finished work of a short life span and which has to cost as little as possible to the buyer.

Even though our author is aware that he will have to use «a machine» in order to survive in the world of illustration, he still hopes that from time to time, he will be able to continue using real colours and offer pictures where the original still looks like a real one-off painting and not a colour photocopy. At least he hopes so...

GTS-R Daytona, 2000. Acrylic inks on paper,
20 x 40 cm





Corsair F4U1A, Front cover
«The Corsair», Histoire & Collections.
Acrylic inks on paper, 25 x 40 cm



B-25 Mitchell,
Box Art. Acrylic inks
on paper,
25 x 40 cm

warlike illustrations were then deemed as being harmful to our dear little blond-headed children. This could be funny if it were not for the fact that model kit makers preferred to bow down to these vindictive, shadowy groups. In order for these products to be accepted by shops, the artists were asked to no longer portray explosions, shooting, fighting or other martial scenes. These recommendations were more or less applied and as far as we know, no artist or model kit manufacturer that did not adhere to these well-thought demands, encountered any problems.

A CHANGE IN SALES POLICY

At the beginning of the 1980s, illustrations stripped for the most part, of their war connotations, became, therefore, more bare, even though they remained more artistically accomplished.

Although they had been present since the very beginning of the model kit market, it was during this period that the Japanese manufacturer Hasegawa was noticed, as apart from offering products of rare sophistication, its success was mainly due to the magnificent illustrations of its in-house artist, Shigeo Koike. Although the impact of beautiful packaging on sales remains to be proved, Hasegawa is without doubt the best example.

Today, although most Japanese manufacturers have retained their policy of beautiful packaging, the same cannot be said for the rest of the world's kit manufacturers with a lot of «Box-Art»



Dewoitine D 520, private collection.
Acrylic inks on paper, 22 x 41,5 cm.

Sukhoi Su 27 Flanker, Box Art.
Acrylic inks on paper, 30 x 50 cm



Potez 63.11, Box Art.
Acrylic inks on paper, 30 x 45 cm.



being so mediocre from an artistic point of view, that it even lets down the product.

It is easily understandable that a one-man company or a small manufacturer making a small production run of kits, cannot afford to employ the services of a good artist. However, one can raise the question concerning large model kit producers. This is particularly the case with today's Chinese made kits that offer high quality products, but with extremely unattractive boxes. As for the former Eastern Bloc countries, who today offer very high quality products, the artistic representations of their packaging varies and would gain from being made by more professional artists. However, it is true, as stated above, that the financial means of these kit manufacturers, as well as their sales figures, is not comparable to that of the big companies.

In the space of forty years, we have gone from a superb, idealising illustration, even bettering a product of sometimes very poor quality, to a poorly made illustration hiding a high technology product.

The kits available to us today are made in a way that we could never have imagined, «even in our dreams», as little as ten years ago. One can ask then, why they do not have more attractive packaging.

There is, maybe, an explanation. With model kit making having fallen out of fashion, today it attracts only demanding «old boys», the average age of whom is situated between 30 and 50 years old. The latter, very much in touch with all that concerns their hobby, can see a product's quality via articles and photos published in international magazines or on the web. They can then buy their kit from a shop or via the internet, as only the contents now are of any interest, the graphic quality of the packaging has lost its importance. This has no doubt been noticed by the manufacturers who have captured the international market and who will not see an increase in customers, on the contrary; we can understand

why then, that these manufacturers do not waste time (and money) in making more attractive a product that will, in all probability, sell anyway. Visual communication no longer seems to be the main sales pitch of model kit makers. Luckily, to remind ourselves of the golden years, some English language publishers have had the good idea of making books concerning artists who worked for model kit makers. Other books take a look at the manufacturers such as Airfix, Aurora, Monogram and Revell, where we can re-discover the «Box-Art» that decorated their packaging; a real feast for the eyes and one that conjures up old memories.

TIMES CHANGE

It cannot have escaped anyone that the traditional illustration has also fallen out of fashion. One only has to look through aviation magazines and books to see that computer generated images have replaced, in an exponential way, painted illustrations.

As a matter of interest, high quality paper used for aerographic art and other particular illustration techniques is no longer made and it is highly probable that medium quality paper will follow suit because of a lack of users. As one



**North American P 51 D
Mustang**, private collection.
Acrylic inks on paper,
30 x 42 cm

says, when giving way to a certain abnegation, «that's progress». Although some graphic artists have mastered the new computer technology, they are few in number. Indeed, although the computer makes it easier for a great many people to see themselves as artists, the keyboard does not have a «immediate talent» or «beautiful picture with ease» key. On the other hand, one can see on some websites, aeronautical illustrations whose realism and quality take the breath away. However, these artists are few and far between.

It is highly likely that this new form of illustration, offered at prices that push the traditional artists out of the market, will soon decorate the boxes of model kits.

A LITTLE TECHNIQUE

In the meantime, this so-called traditional form of illustration, still remains of interest in some people's

eyes, an interest that mostly stems from the fact that, contrary to graphics, the artwork is painted and original. This manual art form continues to fascinate and make one ask questions as to how a picture was thought up and completed.

As the author of this book, I will try and answer the often asked, vast and disconcerting question, «How do you do your illustrations?»

When beginning a profile, one starts by gathering together photographs, but the main preoccupation are the foundations of the picture, that is to say, a plan that is as accurate as possible.

One then starts to ask questions, as there is no such thing as a perfectly accurate plan, to such an extent that one should also be wary of those so-called «manufacturer's plans». It is very edifying to place one plan over another from reference books as they are never exactly the same. The solution is to use a plan which, to the eye, seems the most accurate in terms of shape and proportion.

One then makes an accurate, but basic outline on tracing paper. Working with the latter allows one to modify the inevitable mistakes, rubbing out or scratching away as much as one wishes, something which is impossible with



Boeing KC-135 A, Box Art. Acrylic
inks on paper, 32 x 68 cm

Saab 32 Lansen, Box Art unpublished.
Acrylic inks on paper, 25,5 x 47 cm



paper, as the surface must remain free of any damage for the air brushing phase.

The photographs then come into play and their meticulous study allows for a more accurate outline, correcting any mistakes and putting the finishing touches to certain details.

The plan is then transferred by calibrated mechanical pencil to the paper, by transparency and the help of a light table. Before adding the colour, the surface of the paper is cleaned using kitchen towel lightly dipped in white gasoline in order to remove the invisible, but inevitable finger prints left when drawing the picture.

The surface is then entirely covered by a lightly adhering adhesive film from which are cut, using various blades (X-Acto, bistoury etc), the outlines of the picture, taking care not to cut the surface of the paper. Cutting out the masks, placing them to cover the areas to paint which will then need to be protected to cover the other areas, is the most daunting part of this work technique.

Colouring is then carried out mostly with an airbrush, using transparent, semi-opaque or opaque acrylic artist inks. These acrylics are different from those used in model making that are

thicker and less bright. Finishing details are done with a brush. As for illustrations placed in a setting, such as those used on model kit boxes, the work is more complex but the basics are the same, with photos remaining the main component. Contrary to the «nude» or the still life, it is very difficult to get a plane to pose in one's studio, even by opening the windows. We use then, photographs or even a hastily assembled kit, to choose the desired angle and make a rough sketch.

A few hours of work will be needed to come up with something that looks like a real plane in action. In the best of cases, the setting (angle, decor and atmosphere) is left to the illustrator who often has a free hand. A rough copy (which is nevertheless accurate) is then handed in to await approval. On the other hand, the plane's livery is often determined by the manufacturer, with the choice of transfers having been made before contacting the illustrator, the latter sometimes being forced to cover his subject with a livery that he does not like, or which does not seem to be the best choice.

Occasionally, the illustrator is consulted in order to give his opinion on the choice of liveries that will accompany the kit, but this is rare, and that is a great shame.





Acknowledgements

The author would like to express his gratitude to Magali, Jean-Marie, Cécile, Julien, Michaël, Dominique and Gil for their indispensable input. This book would not have been possible without their professionalism, their availability and their friendship.

Sources

It is very difficult, when dealing with illustrations, to mention the countless sources used to carry out the work as best as possible. Photographs, books, magazines, documents from private collections and the internet are all used by the illustrator. Unfortunately it will not be possible to make a thorough list of these sources here and some will find themselves to be unfairly left out.

Concerning the Great War, books, despite being few, are extremely well made. These indispensable books are the fruit of work by eminent researchers and historians, without whom, the history of Great War aviation would have been forgotten. We mention therefore: The *Windsock Datafile* publications and the *Windsock International magazine*, published by Albatros Productions, *Over The Front*, *Cross and Cockade*, and not forgetting the books by *Osprey Publishing* in the *Aircraft of the Aces* and *Aviation Elite Units*. *Icare*, and the

book, *Escadrilles de l'Aéronautique militaire française*, a veritable bible published by the French Air Force's historical department.

For the Second World War, we mention the following publications:

- Magazines :

Le Fana de l'Aviation, *Avions*, *Air Fan*, *Flight Journal*, *Aeroplane Monthly*, *Fly Past*, *Aero Journal*, *Ciel de Guerre*, *Batailles aériennes*, *Air Magazine*, *Air Enthusiast*.

- Monographs and specialist publications :

Squadron Signal Publications, *Osprey Publishing*, *Burin Do*, *Specialty Press Warbird Tech Series*, *Aviation Notebook Series*, *Classic Publications*, *Aero Detail*, *Mushroom Model Publications*, *4+ Publication*, *Kagero*, *Aero Publishers*, *Ali d'Italia*, *Monografie Lotnicze*, *Warpaint*, *Naval Fighter*, *Wings of Fame*, *World Air Power*, *Widewing Publications*, *SAM Colours*, *SAM Modeller Datafile*, *Aviatik Production*, *Atelier Kevav*.

Design, conception and layout by Gil Bourdeaux, Magali Masselin, Jean-Marie Mongin.

Histoire et Collections
SA au capital de 182 938,82 €
5, avenue de la République
F-75541 Paris Cédex 11 - FRANCE
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www.histoireetcollections.fr

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This book has been designed, typed, laid-out and processed by *Histoire & Collections* on fully integrated computer equipment.

Color separation: Studio Armes & Collections.

ISBN : 978-2-35250-117-6

Publisher's number: 35250

Print by MCC GRAPHICS - ELKAR, Spain,
European Union, May 2010.

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ISBN: 978-2-35250-117-6

